

NOTICE OF MEETING

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 30th March, 2023, 7.00 pm - Woodside Room - George Meehan House, 294 High Road, N22 8JZ (watch the live meeting [here](#), watch the recording [here](#))

Councillors: John Bevan (Chair), Michelle Simmons-Safo, Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Makbule Gunes and Matt White

Co-optees/Non Voting Members: Venassa Holt (Parent Governor Rep) (Co-Optee), Yvonne Denny (Co-opted Member - Church Representative (CofE)) and Lourdes Keever (Co-opted Member - Church Representative (Catholic))

Quorum: 3

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Please note that this meeting may be filmed or recorded by the Council for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site or by anyone attending the meeting using any communication method. Although we ask members of the public recording, filming or reporting on the meeting not to include the public seating areas, members of the public attending the meeting should be aware that we cannot guarantee that they will not be filmed or recorded by others attending the meeting. Members of the public participating in the meeting (e.g. making deputations, asking questions, making oral protests) should be aware that they are likely to be filmed, recorded or reported on.

By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

The chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of urgent business. (Late items will be considered under the agenda item where they appear. New items will be dealt with at item below).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

- (i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and
- (ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Register of Members' Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interests are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

To consider any requests received in accordance with Part 4, Section B, paragraph 29 of the Council's constitution.

6. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 16)

To agree the minutes of the previous meetings as a correct record:

- 12th January 2023
- 19th January 2023

7. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS (PAGES 17 - 70)

To receive and note the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panels and to approve any recommendations contained within:

- Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel – 8th December 2022
- Joint meeting of Adults and Children's Panels – 9th February 2023
- Environment & Community Safety Panel – 15th December 2022
- Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel – 3rd January 2023
- Housing, Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel – 12th December 2022

8. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, JOBS AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Verbal Update

9. COMBINED COMPLAINTS, MEMBER ENQUIRIES, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST AND OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022 (PAGES 71 - 92)

10. BUILDING SAFETY CASE & RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

To follow.

11. CHANGE TO SCRUTINY MEMBERSHIP 2022/23 (PAGES 93 - 96)

12. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

13. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE (PAGES 97 - 106)

14. FUTURE MEETINGS

TBC

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Fiona Alderman

Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ

Wednesday, 22 March 2023

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MINUTES OF MEETING Overview and Scrutiny Committee HELD ON Thursday, 12th January, 2023, 19:00

PRESENT:

Councillors: John Bevan (Chair), Simmons-Safo, Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair), Makbule Gunes, Matt White,

ATTENDING ONLINE: Yvonne Denny and Lourdes Keever

40. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to item one on the agenda in respect of filming at the meeting and Members noted the information contained therein.

41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Davies, Cabinet Member for Communities and Civic Life, who was unwell.

42. URGENT BUSINESS

In light of Cllr Davies having given apologies, the Scrutiny Officer advised that agenda item 8, Cabinet Member Questions would be withdrawn.

The Chair requested that the Cabinet Member be invited to attend the March meeting. **(Action: Clerk).**

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

44. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

45. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meetings on 13th October and 28th November be agreed as a correct record.

46. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panels were received and agreed and any recommendations contained within were agreed:

- Housing, Development & Planning Scrutiny Panel – 1 November
- Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel – 7th November
- Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel – 14th November
- Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel – 17th November

47. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND CIVIC LIFE

This agenda item was withdrawn.

48. SCRUTINY OF THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET AND 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/2028 - CULTURE, STRATEGY & ENGAGEMENT

Clerk’s note – As per Paragraph 7.5 of Part 4, Section H of the Council’s Constitution, Cllr Connor chaired this part of the meeting as an opposition member and the Chair of Budget Scrutiny.

The Panel received a report which set out the Council’s 2023/24 Draft Budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/2028 proposals relating to the Culture, Strategy and Engagement Directorate. The report was introduced by Jess Crowe, Director of Culture, Strategy and Engagement as set out in the agenda pack at pages 61 to 140. Frances Palopoli, Head of Finance (Strategy & Your Council) was present from Corporate Finance. Andy Briggs, AD for Customer Services; Flo Armstrong, Head of Libraries, Arts & Culture; and Claire McCarthy, AD Strategy, Communications & Collaboration were also present for this item. Cllr Chandwani, Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality and Resident Services was present.

By way of introduction, the Panel was advised that the Culture, Strategy and Engagement Directorate had been created following the recent local elections and was comprised of what had been Customer Transformation & Resources, with the addition of Libraries and Culture. The Director of Culture, Strategy and Engagement advised that there were a number of historic savings in her directorate that were reflected in the budget papers. Some of these had been around pre-pandemic and the world had changed since that time. Not least, as there had been an election and the Council had new priorities. The Director advised that her team had taken the opportunity to conduct a thorough review of what was deliverable and which aspects were perhaps no longer the right focus, given other priorities had overtaken them. As a result, there were a number of old savings that were proposed to be deleted or re-profiled and a number of new savings put forward in their stead. There were also a number of growth proposals put forward to make the budget more reflective of existing pressures.

The Director advised that there had been a persistent overspend in the benefits area, largely due to cases of Housing Benefit not reducing as fast as the government grant

allocation anticipated. So, it was proposed that an injection of funding would be put in for 2023/24 to replace the shortfall in grants, but it was expected that this shortfall would reduce as cases of Housing Benefit recipients being moved over to Universal Credit increased. Jess Crowe set out that there were also a number of old savings related to the Front Office Back Office programme, where it was thought that the Council had gone as far as it could in terms of the amount of money that could be taken out the front office at this stage, until digital infrastructure and the resident experience was improved. These savings were proposed for removal from the budget.

The Director advised that there were some old income generation targets in Libraries that were no longer considered to be realistic. In particular, it was identified that income from hiring out spaces at Wood Green Library were no longer considered feasible, as Customer Services had started using those spaces. The Committee was advised that the income generation targets in Libraries still existed and that officers would be working hard to achieve those. It was anticipated that the capital investment in libraries would make those spaces more attractive for being hired out.

The final key area of growth in the budget was identified as being in the Elections team due to the new requirement for individual election registration and the significant pressure this had caused on the postage and printing budget and the overspend created as a result.

The Director for Culture Strategy and Engagement identified that there were also a number of key budget pressures within the service, including how the library service was managed, pressures in residents' services and pressures in terms of digital transformation. There had been a series of digital transformation programmes over the years and it was suggested that many of these had not always worked as well as hoped for. There had been a lot of work being done to re-profile some of these savings. It was commented that the Council needed to invest in its digital infrastructure, and to get this right, in order to manage the cost pressures from customers accessing services via the telephone or face-to-face.

The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee sought assurances around the fact that there were a number of issues within the report that were beyond the Council's control and to what extent could Members be assured that these would be resolved by the time of the final MTFs report was published in February. In response, the Head of Finance set out that the Council was in a difficult position and was at the mercy of a number of external factors, such as ongoing costs arising from Covid and international crises affecting energy costs. In addition, changes at the government level had meant that decisions on funding had been delayed. The Head of Finance advised that the Council would set a balanced budget in February, as it was legally required to do so. The February report would provide an updated financial forecast and this would, crucially, include Haringey funding portion of the local government settlement which was released after the report was published.
- b. The Committee sought further clarification on the general direction of travel of the Council's finances since the report was published. Officers advised that the position would be clearer for the Cabinet report in February, but that there were

still some grants that were outstanding, such as the Public Health Grant. Similarly, the latest position on interest rates was uncertain. Officers agreed to draft a briefing, which provided an updated position on the Council's financial position, for the meeting on 19th January. **(Action: Frances Palopoli).**

- c. The Committee sought assurances about services not being unduly impacted by ongoing financial uncertainty. In response, officers assured the Committee that the ongoing viability of savings was monitored and that where there were undeliverable savings from previous years these has either been taken out or re-profiled.
- d. By way of a follow-up, the Committee noted concerns in previous years about errors in benefit payments costing the council money. In response, officers advised that this issue related to error subsidies in relation to housing benefit payments. The cost to Council was around £600k three years ago but improvements had been made and Members were given assurances that there was no cost last year in relation to error subsidy.
- e. The Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality and Resident Services commented that the days of being able to make cuts that did not affect services were long gone and that after twelve years of austerity, it was inevitable budget reductions would have some impact. The Cabinet Member set out that no-one could have foreseen Covid and the fact that this would lead to 18k residents applying for Universal Credit. Those people were now in receipt of Council Tax reduction, which had an impact on the budget. Similarly, the impact of the cost of living crisis was highlighted as a significant cost pressure to the Council as less people were able pay Council Tax or Business Rates and more people claimed Discretionary Housing Rate.
- f. The Chair sought clarification about what other streams of grant income were still to be finalised. In response, officers set out that the Public Health grant was the largest of the outstanding grants and that this was usually communicated in February. If this information was not available for February Cabinet, then an assumption would be made based on the latest information available. It was noted that this grant was ring-fenced.
- g. The Committee sought assurances about the undeliverable savings identified within Culture, Strategy & Engagement of £2.9m. In response, officers advised this was broadly accounted for by the re-profiling of savings within digital together as set out in the introduction. In effect, the Council had identified that it needed more time to implement this saving due to the need to better understand the impact on back-office services and to make investments in digital infrastructure.
- h. In response to a question about how confident the Director was on achieving the savings set out, the Committee was advised that it was difficult to say at this stage, as part of the problems with previous attempts at digitalisation were the need to get different services on board. This was because the automation of services would impact back office staff in different areas and these services needed to be on-board with the changes. This was part of the reason for requiring more time to implement the savings, as well as the need to invest in improvements to digital infrastructure.

- i. The Committee sought assurances in relation to the new saving around Customer Services & Housing Service Reviews and reassurance that this was not the withdrawal of face-to-face access to services. Officers advised that this was about joining up automated systems at the front-end with back office systems, so that when people applied online for something it did not require manual input into the system from customer service staff. Officers assured Members that people who could not access online services would still be able to access services face-to-face and to utilise their contact of choice.
- j. In relation to the new saving around Customer Services & Housing Service Reviews, the Committee sought clarification about whether the saving in phase one of £300k was due to the reduction of four posts. In response, officers advised that this was not the case. The savings in phase one related specifically to libraries and the customer services savings were in years two and three in order to allow time to drive culture change and improved ways of working.
- k. In response to a question, officers advised that the new customer service management system would allow request to be processed or information got from the system directly, without the need for manually entering online applications inputted by residents. This would also mean that staff did not need to be orientated on a service specific basis.
- l. In relation to a request to clarify what the £300k saving in libraries entailed, officers advised that there were a number of savings to maintenance budgets from the new management system that was in place. LBH was part of a London consortium, for example, and could borrow library books from other boroughs and which would have savings for the library stock budget. Officers assured the Committee that these savings did not relate to any attempt to change the opening hours and that all services would continue to be delivered, just some might be delivered in a different way. For example, the home library service would be integrated into the main library service.
- m. In response to concerns about staff reductions in libraries, the Committee was advised that the four posts referred to were all in Customer Services.
- n. The Committee sought clarification about what the carbon purifying technology referred to as part of the service review saving was. In response, officers agreed to provide a written response on this. **(Action: Claire McCarthy).**
- o. The Committee also sought clarification about what was meant by the term urban hub. In response, officers advised that this was generic term for putting an array of different resources out on the streets. In response to a follow-up, officers agreed with the characterisation that this involved the commercialisation of council owned spaces.
- p. Cllr Bevan raised concerns about any reduction in the maintenance budget for libraries. It was suggested that the Council has invested in its libraries and that it was important that it did not let these facilities deteriorate, which would inevitably lead to higher costs in the long-term.
- q. The Committee raised concerns about how easy it was to rent out spaces in libraries, given the failure of previous savings to achieve income targets on this. In response, officers advised that the new libraries management system made booking these spaces more user friendly. Officers acknowledged that previous

- savings targets were not achieved, particularly as Covid closed libraries for a significant time. The Director advised that the income target was around £250k and that she believed this to be achievable.
- r. The Committee sought clarification around the improved debt recovery saving. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this related to automating the process of chasing up sundry debts and invoices, rather than having it done manually. Examples of sundry debts were given as allotment fees, pest control or hall hire. Council Tax, benefits and welfare debts were chased through other means.
 - s. The Committee sought assurances around how robust the financial assumptions were in relation to £365k income target for improved debt recovery and whether this was related to a £1m debt on SAP. In response, officers advised that they were seeing positive results already and that in light of the £1m debt, this saving related to projections being put in to improve debt provision in future years and that a proportion of this related to sundry debts.
 - t. The Committee sought reassurances around the saving on reducing ineligible claims for the single person discount on Council Tax and the fact that 1900 seemed like a conservative figure. In response the Cabinet Member advised that 1900 was felt a realistic target and that she had personally found the process of trying to give up the discount to be unnecessarily difficult. In relation to a follow-up, officers confirmed that the Council would always contact the person to establish the position first, rather than pre-emptively just taking the discount away. People's details were also cross referenced with different systems, such as the national fraud register. Officers advised that in coming up with the 1900 figure, a process of benchmarking with other boroughs.
 - u. The Committee commented that the single person discount part of the Council tax form did not stand out and that something should be done to make it more prominent, such as a different colour form for a separate piece of paper.
 - v. The Committee requested further information in relation to how much money would be generated by commercial advertising on the side of fleet vehicles and also sought assurances about the oversight of this and how the Council could prevent a company who the Council may not be comfortable with using its fleet for advertising. **(Action: Jess Crowe)**.
 - w. In relation to the Libraries and Benefits base budget pressure, the Committee was advised that this showed that there was money going into the budget in 2023/24 and that this would be reduced in subsequent years towards the base budget position, as the number of Housing Benefit grants reduced over time.
 - x. In relation to a questions about the MTFs savings tracker, officers advised that the two red risks related to FOBO and library savings being taken out as they were considered undeliverable. Digital Together was being profiled so as to be delivered over a longer period of time.
 - y. The Committee requested that future reports minimised the use of acronyms going forward. **(Action: Finance)**.
 - z. In relation to new capital bids, the Committee requested assurances about the capital programme and the potential impact of increased borrowing costs. In response, officers advised that the budget lines relating to these individual bids were effectively provisions for what it was thought would be needed in terms of

- the amount of money borrowed, rather than an estimate of the cost of a particular scheme. Any changes would have to be agreed through the usual decision making processes. Finance colleagues regularly reviewed the capital programme with directors and their management teams to ensure that the assumptions made were still viable.
- aa. Officers identified that the BT Big switch off was possibly the bid where the most further investigation and analysis was required. The Council was awaiting further information from BT to better understand the full costs.
 - bb. The Committee questioned the allocation of £200k for investigating the long-term replacement of SAP, suggesting that seemed quite high to undertake investigations. In response, officers advised that the SAP contract ran to 2027 so there was quite a long lead-in time for this. This allocation was to undertake initial investigations into what kind of system with what type of functionality was required.
 - cc. The Chair of budget scrutiny commented that the descriptions of capital bids were quite high level and that future reports could benefit from further explanation.
 - dd. In relation to the 2023/24 draft capital programme, which had been agreed in previous rounds of budget scrutiny, the Committee sought assurances about whether the Civic Centre spend of £31.9m would be in a position to be spent for 2023/24 and the impact of increased borrowing costs. In response, officers advised that there was a lot of reviewing done of previously set budgets to make sure these were still fit for purpose, not least due to building cost inflation. Officers assured members that this was an up to date statement of what they thought the project would cost. The Civic Centre plans were due to be submitted through the planning process and go out to a contract process. Once a contract was in place, the authority would have much more certainly about the expected costs.
 - ee. In relation to Bruce Castle, officers confirmed that this was a levelling up fund bid for refurbishment to Bruce Castle and that the costs set out were match funding, predicated on a successful bid.
 - ff. The Committee requested assurances about the nature of self-financing schemes and indicative borrowing costs for say every £100k spent. In response, officers advised that this was a bit of a moving feast but that the working assumption at present was that for every £1m borrowed, there would be a £61k impact on the revenue budget.
 - gg. The Panel also sought clarification on timeframes for these borrowing costs. In response, officers advised that it largely depended on the type of asset and that an IT system could be five years, whilst a building would be more likely to be 35-50 years.
 - hh. The Committee sought further clarity about the self-financing nature of the Civic Centre scheme and how it would generate an income large enough to cover its own costs. In response, the Finance officer advised that it was not about income in this case. Instead, the self-financing nature of the bid was from reduced costs derived from moving out of existing accommodation, rather than an income as such.

- ii. The Committee requested further information in relation to the Civic Centre and Bruce Castle to better understand the revenue impact on borrowing costs for both schemes and also more information about how the self-financing nature of these schemes would work. **(Action: Finance)**.

RESOLVED

That the Panels considered and provided recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), on the Council's 2023/24 Draft Budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/2028 proposals relating to its remit.

49. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

- I. That the Committee noted the current work programmes for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the four Scrutiny Panels and agreed any amendments, as appropriate.
- II. That the Committee gave consideration to the agenda items and reports required for its next meetings on 19th January 2023 and 30th March 2023.
- III. That the Committee noted and approved the terms of reference for the Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel's Review on Physical Activity and Sport for Children and Young People.

50. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

51. FUTURE MEETINGS

19 January 2023
30 March 2023

CHAIR: Councillor John Bevan

Signed by Chair

Date

MINUTES OF MEETING Overview and Scrutiny Committee HELD ON Thursday, 19th January, 2023, 7.30 - 9.30 pm

PRESENT:

**Councillors: John Bevan (Chair), Pippa Connor (Vice-Chair),
Makbule Gunes and Matt White**

52. FILMING AT MEETINGS

53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair referred Members present to item one on the agenda in respect of filming at the meeting and Members noted the information contained therein.

54. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair agreed to alter the published agenda so that Agenda Item 9 – Scrutiny of the 2024/25 Draft budget was taken before Item 8 – Cabinet Member questions.

*Clerk's note - the minutes reflect the order the items were discussed, rather than the order given on the agenda. *

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

56. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None

57. MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

The minutes of Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel on 3rd January 2023, which were marked to follow on the agenda were withdrawn.

The minutes following Scrutiny Panels were received and noted and any recommendations contained within were approved:

Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel – 8th December 2022

Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel – 12th December 2022

Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel – 15th December 2022

58. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2023/24

The Committee received the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/24 for comments, before it was presented to Corporate Committee and then Full Council for final approval. The report was introduced by Tim Mpfu, Head of Pensions and Treasury, as set out in the agenda pack at pages 35-60. The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee noted that the Council was due to increase its borrowing year and year and queried the reasons why around half of this borrowing was in the General Fund, and was therefore not related to housebuilding. In response, officers advised that one of the primary drivers were various regeneration schemes that the authority was preparing for as part of its financial framework. It was emphasised that a number of these were self-financing, and that they would only proceed following a final decision by Members. Other areas relevant to increased borrowing the General Fund were noted as: Increased expenditure in the schools budget; maintaining key infrastructure in the borough such as roads, parks and bridges; the development of the civic centre; and digital transformation.
- b. In relation to a follow-up, officers confirmed that the key regeneration projects were Gourlay Place, Wards Corner and the Selby Centre and that these included an element of housing which was in the General Fund at present but would be transferred over to the HRA in future.
- c. In light of the significant increases in borrowing, the Committee sought assurances about rising interest rates and the risk this posed to the Council. In response, officers advised that the capital programme was a framework to allow the Council to undertake these schemes at a future date and that a future decision would be made on a scheme by scheme basis, which involved individual business cases with up to date borrowing costs in each business case. It was also noted that the Council's TM strategy was based on advice it had received from Arlingclose. Officers advised that of course interest rates going up was a significant challenge for the Council and was one of the main drivers behind the financial challenges that it faced. The Council needed to be able to profile the debt so that the point at which it reached maturity was spread out.
- d. The Committee questioned whether there was a legal limit on how much an authority could borrow or whether it was all down to individual business cases. In response, officers advised that there was no formula for determining the maximum a Council could borrow, however the authority had to operate within the parameters of the prudential code. The Treasury Management Strategy set out the local financial consequences of existing and new borrowing, translating into changes in debt provision in future years. The impact of this on the revenue account was set out in terms of the costs to maintain that debt. This was the acid test of whether a particular level of borrowing was deemed to be affordable or not. The business case was a process of subsequent checks to make sure the financial assumptions underlying the scheme were still valid.
- e. The Committee questioned how much debt, for example, would the Council have to refinance within six months. In response, officers advised that they did not have the exact figure to hand but that it was less than 15% of the total debt that was up for repayment within any one year. Officers advised that this was not an area of particular concern and that this information could be shared with the Committee as part of the next Treasury Management update to OSC.
(Action: Tim).

- f. The Committee questioned how much the Council held in reserves to offset its debt liabilities. In response, officers set out that this question related to internal borrowing and how this featured in the programme. This was made up of cash on hand and grants held ahead of spend. The other key aspect in this was the delivery of the capital programme and any slippages therein. The working assumption was that 80% of the programme would be delivered as scheduled. The Director Finance advised that the cash available to offset borrowing costs came from a variety of different places, not all of which were useable reserves. As of the 31st March 2022, the authorities useable reserves for the General Fund for £120M, including the general fund balance and earmarked reserves.
- g. The Committee sought further assurances about whether this was the right time to be increasing borrowing levels, given the external financial risks. In response, the Director Finance commented that this challenge needed to be brought to bear at future decision making points. The Committee was advised that much of the spend was time dependent, such as there were roads that needed to be replaced. The authority was also a substantial recipient of grants for housing from the GLA which had a fixed window for implementation.
- h. The Committee sought clarification about the original £2.5m that was earmarked for housing on the Wards Corner site and whether that would be returned to the Bridge Renewal Trust, following the termination of the development agreement with Grainger. The Chair requested a written response from officers on this point (**Action: Jon Warlow /David Joyce**).

RESOLVED

That the Committee scrutinised and provided comments on the proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/24.

59. SCRUTINY OF THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET AND 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/2028 -

The Committee received the Council's 2023/24 Draft Budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/2028 proposals. The report was introduced by Jon Warlow, Director of Finance as set out in the agenda pack at pages 61- 174. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Investment, Sarah Williams was also present for this agenda item. Frances Palopoli and Josephine Lyseight from Corporate Finance were also present. As the Chair of Budget Scrutiny, Cllr Connor chaired the meeting for this agenda item. The key points of the Director of Finance's introduction were noted as:

- As in recent years, this budget was set in a very challenging climate for this local authority, and the UK more generally. The overspend at Quarter 2 of the current 2022/23 financial year was around £16m. A significant improvement to this position was not anticipated and the degree of challenge was not expected to lessen. The overspend was primarily related to care service areas.
- The draft report presented to Members was prepared in December and was a best estimate in advance of the local government provisional financial statement.
- It was commented that in light of the savings programme this year, the amount of savings not achieved at all, was not unreasonable. Some of the previous savings have been re-profiled to future years.

- The Director of Finance advised that there was nearly £50m of additional investment in the budget, two-thirds of which was in care services. The additional net savings programme totalled around £10m. There were no new savings put forward in last year's budget.
- There was a circa £3m budget gap in the draft report, but this was before the local government finance settlement was released.
- There had been reports in the media that the government had increased core spending power for local authorities by an average of 9.2%. This was 9.8% for Haringey. This core spending power was made up of the majority of income streams to the General Fund including the revenue support grant, new homes bonus, social care grants and Council Tax. The majority of this increase was predicated on increasing Council Tax by the maximum permitted of 4.99%. The draft budget had been set with an assumption of a 2.99% increase.
- The Director of Finance advised that the main funding elements for Haringey had broadly come out as anticipated. Social care grants were higher than expected by around £10m. Of that £10m, £3.3m were specific grants, which left around £6.5m increase in the social care grant. Whilst the additional funding was welcomed, the Director cautioned that this did not even match the degree of expected increase in spending forecast in the social care area.
- The consequences of the grant announcements would be further reflected in the February report. The final MTFs report in February would set a balanced budget, as required by law.
- In relation to the HRA, the Committee was advised that there was a new form of rent modelled at a 7% increase, as announced by the government.
- In relation to the DSG and schools, the Council was continuing its dialogue with the government about joining the DfE Safety Valve Programme and this was progressing as well as might be expected.

The following arose as part of the discussion of this item:

- a. The Committee sought assurances around the current budget gap and the level of reserves being used to offset this deficit. In response, officers advised that the draft budget utilised £5.5m of reserves from a reserve that was specially created for this purpose two years ago. The final MTFs report in February would set out in detail the updated position in detail following receipt of any outstanding grants. The Council was legally required to set a balanced budget and officers gave assurances that it would do so.
- b. The Committee sought clarification as to whether further announcements were expected from government that may improve the picture. In response, it was noted that there were a number of outstanding grant allocations on which the authority was waiting. The largest of these was the Public Health grant which was around £20m and it was commented that this was always announced at a late stage in the budget setting process.
- c. The Committee enquired how much additional income could be raised from Council Tax, for example how much would a 1% increase generate. In response, officers advised that a 1% increase would equate to around £1.2m.
- d. The Committee sought assurances around the additional £6.5m in social care grant, over what had been anticipated and whether this would be used to increase the base budget position. In response, officers advised that there was no direct correlation between the amount of grant received and an increase in the social care budget. The draft budget already included a number of

- assumptions about what has been funded and officers reiterated that the increased grant did not match the expected additional spend required in this area.
- e. The Committee sought assurances around the Safety Valve programme and requested an update on when Haringey might get a positive decision on this from DfE, given it was supposed to happen in December. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that everyone was very keen to get this formed up as soon as possible. The Cabinet Member set out that it was her understanding that the Secretary of State was looking positively on Haringey's submission but that she didn't have any further information at this stage.
 - f. The Committee went through the table of budget recommendations, as well as the additional information that was provided in response to queries submitted by the scrutiny panels at their respective budget meetings, along with responses to queries on the Culture, Strategy and Engagement budget raised at the OSC meeting on 12th January.
 - g. In relation to saving AHC_SAV_008, Housing Demand – Targeted 1 bedroom move on project, the Committee requested that further information be supplied to the Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel on how the saving related to the spend on families living in TA. How does the £80k saving relate to 100 families, given the figures provided? **(Action: Clerk/Finance)**.
 - h. The Chair of OSC enquired whether the additional rent charged under the London Affordable Rent model could result in some residents being automatically entitled to housing benefit to meet the increased rent costs. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that LAR would only be charged on new build properties and that anyone moving into one of those properties would have a choice of whether they would like to do so. Nobody would be forced into a new set of circumstances, without their consent.
 - i. The Chair of the Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel requested that a written response to be provided to the Panel, in relation to the shortfall in clean-up costs from THFC match days and events and how much money the Council would like to recover from Spurs for this. This was in relation to the MTFS tracker/pre agreed saving PL20/9. **(Action: Clerk/Finance)**.
**Clerk's note – this information was provided to Cabinet and the costs vary year on year, depending on the number of matches. The estimated costs for the current year for match day cleansing are £100k. For 2023/24, it is anticipated these costs will be circa £115k. To date, the club have contributed no funding towards these costs. **
 - j. In response to a point of clarification, the Chair of the Children's Panel agreed that the budgetary impact of the Safety Valve programme be included in future quarterly budget updates to the Children's Panel, rather than OSC. **(Action: Clerk)**.
 - k. In relation to the existing capital programme, line 214 on Osborne Grove nursing home, the Committee requested a breakdown of the financial benefits expected, if the scheme went ahead. This was so that these could be shared with the co-design group, in order to elicit further engagement/buy-in from residents. **(Action: Finance)**.
 - l. In relation to the new saving proposal CSE_SAV_002 - additional commercial advertising opportunities, officers advised that the revenue target for part of this saving from advertising on council vehicles was £30k per annum. After some

discussion, the Committee voted by three votes to two, in favour of requesting that Cabinet remove the portion of the overall saving, CSE_SAV_002, that specifically related to advertising on Council fleet vehicles given the relatively low amount of money involved.

- m. The Committee requested that future budget scrutiny reports contain a panel specific cover report, setting out the key information relevant to each panel and that the main Cabinet report be attached as an appendix. **(Action: Finance)**.

RESOLVED

That the Committee considered and provided recommendations on the Council's 2023/24 Draft Budget and Five Year Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/28.

60. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & LOCAL INVESTMENT

The Committee undertook a Q&A Session with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Investment. The following arose as part of this session:

- a. The Committee enquired whether any decision had been taken in relation to setting the next year's Council Tax rates. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this was still under consideration at the current stage.
- b. The Committee asked for further information about how participatory budgeting would work. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that there were a variety of different models, but that Haringey would be looking to involve resident engagement in its future budgetary processes. It was also suggested that this would include allowing local groups to spend local pots of money, such as the Carbon Fund.
- c. In response to a follow-up question, the Cabinet Member advised that she did not envisage consulting on the budget at an earlier stage in future, given how late much of the funding information was received from government and the resultant difficulty in making that engagement meaningful.
- d. The Committee sought assurances from the Cabinet Member about the level of borrowing proposed as part of the capital budget. In response, the Committee was advised that officers had provided assurances about the need for robust business plans to be in place and the need for continuous monitoring. The Cabinet Member set out that in times of austerity, the capital budget allowed the Council an opportunity to improve things for local residents, such as providing better parks and better housing.
- e. The Committee sought clarification about whether the Cabinet Member was suggesting that there was a risk that by not investing in the borough through the capital programme, that the long term costs to the revenue budget would be even higher. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that this was absolutely the case and cited the Safety Valve project as a relevant example of invest to save.
- f. The Committee queried whether the local authority had considered the impact of budget deficits on schools in the east of the borough, including the fact that a number were having to make teachers and teaching assistants redundant. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged these concerns and advised that this was a prominent issue at the forefront of people's minds, which had been raised at a number of recent meetings that she had attended.

RESOLVED

Noted.

61. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

62. FUTURE MEETINGS

30th March

CHAIR: Councillor John Bevan

Signed by Chair

Date

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ADULTS & HEALTH
SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY 8th DECEMBER 2022,
6.30pm - 8.35pm**

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Pippa Connor (Chair), Anna Abela, Cathy Brennan,
Thayahlan Iyngkaran and Felicia Opoku**

ATTENDING ONLINE:

Councillors: Sheila Peacock

Co-opted Members: Helena Kania

35. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ali Amasyali. Cllr Sheila Peacock gave apologies that she was not able to attend in person, though she did join the full meeting online.

37. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr Pippa Connor reported that the Cabinet's response to the recommendations of the Adult & Health Scrutiny Panel's Review on Sheltered Housing and Access to Health and Social Care Services had been discussed at the Cabinet meeting on 6th December 2022. She noted that the recommendations of the Panel had been broadly accepted and that an update report would be received by the Panel next year which would include input from various partners as they were directly relevant to the recommendations.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Pippa Connor declared an interest by virtue of her membership of the Royal College of Nursing.

Cllr Pippa Connor declared an interest by virtue of her sister working as a GP in Tottenham.

Cllr Thayahlan Iyngkaran declared an interest by virtue of his membership of the Royal College of Radiologists.

Cllr Thayahlan Iyngkaran declared an interest by virtue of his wife working for Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health Trust.

39. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/ PRESENTATIONS/ QUESTIONS

None.

40. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

41. SCRUTINY OF THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET / 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2023/24 - 2027/28)

Josephine Lyseight, Head of Finance (People), introduced the report on the Draft Budget for 2023/24 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2023/24 to 2027/28, noting that the suite of documents included details about new revenue savings proposals, revenue growth proposals and capital proposals as well as existing revenue savings and the proposed capital programme as a whole across the MTFS period. She explained that the additional new growth for the General Fund was £14.8m, of which £6m was being allocated to Adult Services. The Council was approximately £3m short of achieving a balanced position but this did not factor in any potential additional money arising from the Government's recent Autumn Statement. This included the flexibility for local authorities to increase the Adult Social Care precept from 1% to 2% as well as additional government funding to support hospital discharge. The final figures for grants would not be known until the Local Government Finance Settlement had been announced. However, the expectation was for a balanced budget position to be achieved by February 2023 when the Budget would be set.

Josephine Lyseight and colleagues then responded to questions from the Panel:

- Asked by Cllr Brennan how much difference a rise in the adult social care precept could make to the Budget, Josephine Lyseight estimated that this would raise approximately £1m per year which would be ringfenced for Adult Social Care services.

- Asked by Cllr Iyngkaran when the details of the adult social care grants would be known, Josephine Lyseight said that this was expected within the next couple of weeks but that it had been assumed that the grants would continue at a flat rate adjusted for inflation.
- Cllr Iyngkaran queried how much additional funding would be raised by a 1% increase in Council Tax. Josephine Lyseight noted that there would be the flexibility to do this from next year, as announced in the Government's Autumn Statement, but would need to provide a written response on the estimated amount that this could raise. **(ACTION)**
- Asked by Cllr Iyngkaran what the means for balancing the budget last year had been, Josephine Lyseight said that this involved a mix of Council Tax, general and specific grants from the Government as well as various fees and charges and maximising income from partners that the Council worked with on the delivery of services.
- Helena Kania queried the assumptions in place around inflation in the Budget. Josephine Lyseight clarified that a figure of 5% had been used for the care purchasing budget which had been seen as a reasonable assumption at the time that the budget proposals had been assembled. However, she acknowledged that the inflation rate could eventually turn out to be higher.
- Cllr Connor asked about the source of the additional £6m for Adult Services and whether this could potentially be raised again in future. Josephine Lyseight explained that the MTFs was reviewed each year and that services articulated the likely growth needs that were required. The ability to provide growth depended on the ability to deliver other savings as well as assumptions about other income and grants that were coming in. The £6m that had been awarded for 2023/24 would remain within the base budget in subsequent years and that budget would then be reviewed through the MTFs on an annual basis. There had also been a significant contribution to Adult Services from the Strategic Planning Reserve as set out in paragraph 5.7 of the main report.
- Cllr Connor referred to paragraph 5.5 of the main report and requested further explanation of what "*putting a challenge to existing and proposed capital programme*" involved. Josephine Lyseight explained that business cases were required before capital monies could be drawn down and that the capital programme was consistently reviewed to make sure that the schemes were still required, whether they could be brought forward to deliver revenue savings or whether schemes could be reduced to help fund other capital proposals.
- Cllr Connor referred to paragraph 8.35 of the Cabinet report which illustrated a cost of £13.3m in 2022/23 for interest payments to the revenue budget resulting from capital expenditure and noted that this was projected to rise to £37.9m by 2027/28. She queried whether capital expenditure could continue at the current level given the costs incurred by rising interest rates. Josephine Lyseight said that assumptions would have been made about the impact of the capital proposals on the revenue budget through the business cases including any

revenue savings and the cost of financing the capital. She agreed to provide further detail to the Panel on the specifics of this in writing. **(ACTION)**

- Cllr Abela referred to paragraph 7.51 of the Cabinet report which stated that the final year of a challenging savings programme for Adult Services had been removed and requested further explanation of this. Beverley Tarka, Director of Adults, Health & Communities, explained that, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the final year of savings for the previous MTFS had been based largely on demand management approaches that were no longer valid. The assumptions that preventative activities would reduce demand for care had not played out, as the impact of Covid had led to an increase in the number and complexity of cases. Alternative solutions had therefore been put in place.

New Revenue Savings Proposals 2023/24

Beverley Tarka introduced the five savings proposals set out in Appendix C. She noted that proposal AHC_SAV_001 on improved processes and practices was an ongoing initiative that had already paid dividends and was based on efficiencies such as reviewing residents on care packages in a timely fashion. The Council's aim was to promote the independence of residents where possible and so it was necessary to conduct a review, engage with providers to determine the appropriate cost of care and to implement the outcomes appropriately. Commissioning for independence rather than having static care costs would help to ensure that value for money was being achieved. For example, a mental health patient may need a high level of support after discharge from hospital but, over time, their behavioural needs and improvements in support could mean that a high level of support was no longer necessary. Vicky Murphy, Service Director for Adult Social Services, added that significant work had been undertaken to optimise the review system at the six-week stage as well as at the annual review. There had previously been delays in getting the early six-week review and so now there were opportunities to reduce levels of care where appropriate at an earlier stage.

Cllr Connor asked how the savings being made with providers over the cost of care could be maintained over the long-term. Beverley Tarka said that the constant throughput of new clients meant that savings could be made on an ongoing basis. For example, clients were previously staying on reablement for up to 14 weeks when reablement should usually be a 6-week free-of-charge intervention. Having brought this figure back to 6 weeks there were be new cohorts to work with on a regular basis meaning that savings would continue to be made.

Asked by Cllr Connor why the savings for AHC_SAV_001 were considerably smaller in 2024/25 when compared to 2023/24, Beverley Tarka said that the figures were based on assumptions on the clients coming through the system and their needs. These figures were reviewed annually and so updated figures would be provided in the following year's budget.

Cllr Abela observed that savings proposal AHC_SAV_002 was based on more effective mental health accommodation but also noted that there was insufficient accommodation in the Borough which was unlikely to be resolved within the next year. Beverley Tarka explained that when a mental health patient was ready for discharge from hospital, a decision may have to be taken to place them out of Borough at a very high cost. The Council then had to work with support structures to bring that person closer to home, often identifying local housing providers and achieve better value for money and better outcomes for individuals. If there was less pressure at the point of discharge, there may be a more appropriate outcome for the individual rather than sending them out of Borough.

Asked by Cllr Conner to provide further details about the 'Safety Valve' programme set out in savings proposal AHC_SAV_005, Josephine Lyseight explained that the Adult Services version of this programme followed on from a programme in Children's Services which had focused on three strands. These were on reducing demand for education and healthcare plans, more efficient commissioning strategies and enabling projects on service improvement. Work had been carried out to identify possible savings of up to £49m over five years across 18 different projects. The Department for Education had agreed to fund the historic deficit on Dedicated Schools Grants if it was demonstrated that these savings could be achieved by 2027/28. In terms of Adult Services, a lot of the service improvement work was already in place so the Safety Valve initiative was to create a programme of work that could be articulated to partners on how savings would be delivered.

Cllr Iyngkaran expressed concerns that the bulk of the £7.73m projected savings in 2023/24 were based on two specific savings proposals, noting that around 50% of the previous year's savings had not been achieved, and asked what mitigations would be in place if these savings were not achieved. Josephine Lyseight clarified that the savings proposed were made in the year specified and then maintained in every subsequent year. Beverley Tarka agreed that the savings were challenging but reiterated that the previous assumptions around savings no longer applied due to Covid and so a new approach had been developed based on intervening early to save costs and deliver a balanced budget. In the same way, it would be necessary to develop alternative savings in the event that delivering on the £7.73m savings was not achieved, as challenging as that may be. There had been a shift away from demand management assumptions, because the context in this area was so volatile, and towards more concrete savings based on commissioning efficiencies and improving value for money. She also commented that this area was particularly challenging due to insufficient funding from central Government in recent years. Vicky Murphy added that local authorities had seen cuts of 20-25% over the past 5-7 years while seeing a higher demand of up to 20% in acuity and demand.

Adding to the discussion on disruption caused by Covid, Vicky Murphy highlighted the significant increase in high-cost mental health placements out of Borough in recent years. She said that a new project group had been set up in the past six months which had worked to bring several of those individuals back in Borough in a supported living service at a much reduced cost. There were also frequent meetings with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to look at how the financial risks in this area could be shared.

Cllr das Neves, Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care & Well-being, commented that the sector had asked for reform and a different approach to social care, but local authorities were constantly in the position of having to put more funds into vital services and to meet increasing and more complex needs. There were significant conversations at national level about hospital discharge, the challenges of an ageing population, people with complex needs following Covid and challenges within the NHS. She added that both the health and social care systems needed a greater level of support at national level that was currently not forthcoming.

Asked by Cllr Iyngkaran when the service would come back to the Panel if the savings were not deliverable, Beverley Tarka said that there was regular monitoring with corporate colleagues and an open dialogue about savings. The service had previously written off £4m of savings in preparation for the development of this plan as they were not deliverable for the reasons previously set out. In response to a query from Cllr Connor, Josephine Lyseight clarified that 'RAG' ratings on the proposals would be provided in the savings tracker next year but that would not happen at this stage because the proposals were for 2023/24 which had not yet started.

Cllr Connor commented that it would be useful to have a greater understanding of the financial contributions made by partners including the ICB, particularly given the robust conversations about hospital discharge and pressures on social care. Beverley Tarka said that the North Central London (NCL) ICB had received £6.4m to support winter discharge across the five Boroughs, of which Haringey Council had received £957k. She felt that the challenge was not to have one-off funding that doesn't lead to sustainable pathway outcomes but to have a funding structure that was more sustainable over the longer-term. Asked by Cllr Opoku whether this funding was fairly distributed across the Boroughs, Beverley Tarka responded that the expectation was that the Council and the ICB would work collaboratively to identify where resources were required, particularly around intermediate care when people were medically optimised to leave hospital but not quite ready to be at home.

Asked for further details about the breakdown of this funding, Beverley Tarka clarified that the overall funding for the NCL ICB area was approximately £12m but not all of this was provided directly to local authorities and the allocations were based on a formula. It was agreed that the full breakdown of the funding allocation would be provided to the Panel in writing. **(ACTION)** Asked by Cllr Iyngkaran, how the Council

would use this additional funding, Beverley Tarka said that discussions were still ongoing about this but that the Council would be required to evidence how it supported the effectiveness of hospital discharge. She also noted that the Council would not receive this funding all at once and that it would be received in stages.

Cllr Connor suggested that future savings proposals provided to Scrutiny should include some short bullet points on any risks that had been identified. **(ACTION)**

New Revenue Growth Proposals 2023/24

Beverley Tarka introduced the two growth proposals set out in Appendix D. In relation to proposal AHC_GR_001 on the level of acuity and complexity in clients, she noted that £2.8m of additional funding had already been added to the 2023/24 budget based on proposals from the previous year. However, as explained earlier, the service continuously revised and reassessed need and so this proposal added a further £2m to the budget based on anticipated demand. She added that proposal AHC_GR_002 added a further £4m to the budget to meet the anticipated inflationary pressures.

Asked by Cllr Connor what additional growth beyond this was anticipated from 2024/25 onwards, Josephine Lyseight said that this would need to be reviewed and put forward at the same time next year if necessary, but that there were limited resources across the Council. Sean Huang, Principal Accountant, clarified that the £2.8m of additional funding had already been built into the budget previously and was therefore not displayed in Appendix D as it was not new growth. In the same way, additional funding had already been allocated for 2024/25 onwards and was not displayed in Appendix D. Asked for further details on the amounts, Sean Huang said that he could provide the figures to the Panel in writing. **(ACTION)** In response to a question from Cllr Iyngkaran, Josephine Lyseight clarified that once growth had been added to the base budget, the funding remained in the budget for every subsequent year.

In relation to proposal AHC_GR_002, Cllr Iyngkaran expressed concerns that there was a risk here as inflation had been assumed to be 5% even though the national inflation rate was in excess of 10%. Beverley Tarka responded that this was a corporate decision which the service directors did not have a say in, but that her understanding was that the 5% rate was a best guess based on a situation that was not static. Josephine Lyseight added that the Government's Autumn Statement had assumed a rate of 7.4%, but this figure had not been known at the time that the budget proposals had been developed. Assumptions would need to be adjusted before the Budget was finalised in any case when the Local Government Finance Settlement had been announced and there would be a question at a corporate level on whether the 5% figure should be increased.

Previously Agreed Revenue Savings

The Panel then asked questions relating to Appendix E which tracked previously agreed savings covering 2022/23 to 2025/26.

Asked by Cllr Iyngkaran and Cllr Connor about the unachieved savings marked red on the chart, Beverley Tarka explained that these had been reprofiled and replaced with the alternative savings proposals considered under Appendix C. It had been accepted that the original savings would not be achieved in 2022/23 and were instead being reprofiled with the new savings proposals over future years.

Asked by Cllr Connor about the unachieved saving marked amber on the chart, Beverley Tarka explained that this meant that there was still potential for this to be delivered and that this would continue to be reviewed and could change to green in subsequent months based on new data.

Cllr Iyngkaran referred to the achieved savings marked green on the chart, noting that saving B2.8 on mental health had overdelivered savings by £500k. Beverley Tarka explained that this related to the reductions of high cost out-of Borough placements that Vicky Murphy had set out earlier in the meeting (under savings proposal AHC_SAV_002 on Appendix C). Similarly, on saving PA6 relating to high cost day opportunities, the £15k saving target for 2021/22 was based on the opening of the Chad Gordon Centre which enabled clients to transfer back in Borough. The 2021/22 saving had not been achieved due to Covid but, now that services were opening up again, a larger saving of £125k was now projected for 2022/23.

Cllr Peacock asked for further details about mental health placements as she was concerned about disturbances in sheltered housing schemes. Beverley Tarka commented that the savings being discussed related to complex cases and so would not be placed in sheltered housing. Vicky Murphy said that she was happy to discuss the issue with mental health and sheltered housing in further detail with Councillors after the meeting. **(ACTION)**

New Capital Budget Proposals 2023/24

The Panel then asked questions relating to Appendix F which provided descriptions of two new capital bids.

In relation to the bid on locality hubs, Cllr Connor noted that £3m of capital funding was proposed from the Council and asked what contributions were being made by partners. Gill Taylor, Assistant Director for Communities & Housing Support, clarified that this bid did not relate to the Locality Hub in Wood Green which was being led by health colleagues. While the Council would be making a contribution towards this, it was not the lead delivery partner. That was a significant capital project that was expected to open in 2024 and would involve Connected Communities along with

diagnostic services and other health services. The bid in Appendix F related specifically to the use of Council buildings to develop locality services that Council officers would staff. It was possible that there might be health capital input as the project was developed but that was not currently anticipated for the purposes of the bid.

In relation to the bid on Edwards Drive, Cllr Connor requested further details on the self-financing element of the project. Gill Taylor explained that money was currently being spent on placing adults with learning disabilities in a range of different accommodation types. Once the new service at Edwards Drive was developed, the same provisions would be provided with better quality services and with anticipated savings due to the density of provision that would be possible. The anticipated savings would be generated over a 40-year period and this would finance the project.

Proposed Capital Programme 2023/2028

The Panel then asked questions relating to Appendix F which provided details of the 2023/24 – 2027/28 Draft Capital Programme as a whole.

Asked by Cllr Connor for an update on Osborne Grove Nursing Home (Scheme Ref 214), Gill Taylor said that the project was ongoing and that an item would be brought to the Panel in 2023 to share further details on developments and the co-design work. There were significant inflationary pressures on all capital projects and there had been continuous business case reprofiling on Osborne Grove over the past 12 months. The project still currently stacked up financially based on the better-quality services that would be delivered and the anticipated savings. However, this remained under review with an emphasis on reducing any delays in order to prevent additional costs from being incurred.

Asked by Cllr Connor whether there were any specific financial variations on any capital projects worth highlighting, Gill Taylor confirmed there were no underspends. She commented that Osborne Grove was clearly the most significant project in terms of cost and scale, but that it was also worth noting that Canning Crescent was a major ongoing project due for completion.

Helena Kania queried why the funding for Aids & Adaptations (Scheme Ref 201) remained static over the next few years even though people would need more support to remain independent in their homes. Josephine Lyseight explained that this budget was funded by a grant from central Government and so, while the Council could lobby for an uplift in future years, it had little control over the amount of funding provided. Gill Taylor added that the Adults Department was currently working on a project to explore different forms of assistive technologies for people in their homes which would provide opportunities for savings. Vicky Murphy commented that further data could be provided on what the DFG (Disabled Facilities Grant) was currently funding in

Haringey and the revised grant position which would be available in the New Year.
(ACTION)

Helena Kania queried why only two years of funding for Social Emotional & Mental Health Provision (Scheme Ref 218) was shown. Gill Taylor explained that this particular budget was to support a number of different capital projects, including improvements to existing buildings to build additional capacity or improve the quality of provision. It was also to explore a number of other projects that had not yet progressed to the business case stage and so funding would not be specifically allocated until that time. There was a lot of activity taking place in the mental and emotional health space and this was not the only funding being invested in this area.

Conclusions

Cllr Brennan asked whether the revised figures resulting from adjustments to the inflation figure or new information following the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement would be provided to the Panel. Josephine Lyseight explained that the final budget, including any revisions, would go to Cabinet in February. Cllr Connor added that the recommendations from the Scrutiny Panels would be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 19th January so there would be an opportunity to consider any substantive changes that were known at that time.

In terms of recommendations, Cllr Connor noted that the Panel had strongly highlighted risks associated with rising interest rates and therefore the costs to the revenue budget of borrowing for capital spend. The Panel had also expressed concerns about the risks associated with allocating only a 5% uplift for inflationary pressures while the Government's Autumn Statement had estimated that the rate of inflation would be 7.4%. Cllr Iyngkaran added that the high level of anticipated demand on services was also a considerable risk in terms of whether this had been adequately factored into projections going forward.

Cllr Connor noted that additional information would be provided by officers on Osborne Grove and on Aids & Adaptations/DFG.

Cllr Abela asked whether the Panel would be updated throughout the year on how the assumption on risk were working out and whether the proposed savings were on track. Cllr Connor explained that as the Chair, she received quarterly updates on finance, performance and risk and that any interested Members of the Panel could attend. Specific updates could also be brought to the Panel meetings.

RESOLVED – That the Panel should make recommendations on the Budget proposals on the risks associated with interest rates, inflation and demand levels to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as detailed above.

RESOLVED – That the Panel should receive additional information from officers as requested prior to the next Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.

42. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Dominic O'Brien, Scrutiny Officer, noted that there had been a few minor updates to the Panel's Work Programme, including the scheduling of an update on dementia services in approximately nine months. A joint meeting with the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel was scheduled in February following by the next regular meeting of the Panel in March which would include an update on actions taken following the Panel's previous recommendations on aids & adaptations as well as an update on integrated working and co-production.

Cllr Connor added that a report would be coming back to the Panel next year on sheltered housing and access to health and social services following the recent Cabinet response to the Panel's Scrutiny Review on this subject and that this would include input from relevant partners.

Cllr Connor also informed the Panel that evidence sessions for the next Scrutiny Review on access to social care services would be commencing in the New Year and that Panel Members should suggest any carers groups or community groups that the Panel could speak to as part of this work.

43. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 9th Feb 2022 (7:00pm) (Joint meeting with CYP Scrutiny Panel)
- 13th Mar 2022 (6:30pm)

CHAIR: Councillor Pippa Connor

Signed by Chair

Date

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MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING OF ADULTS & HEALTH AND CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANELS HELD ON THURSDAY 9TH FEBRUARY, 2023

PRESENT:

Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel Councillors: Makbule Gunes (Chair), Anna Abela, Lester Buxton, Lotte Collett, Marsha Isilar-Gosling, Sue Jameson and Mary Mason

Children & Young People's Co-optees/Non Voting Members: Yvonne Denny (Church representative) and Amanda Bernard (Haringey SEND Parent Carer Forum)

Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel Councillors: Pippa Connor (Chair), Anna Abela, Cathy Brennan, Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Felicia Opoku and Sheila Peacock

Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel Co-optees: Helena Kania

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda item 1 in respect of filming at this meeting. Members noted the information contained therein.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Lourdes Keever, Venassa Holt and Ali Amasyali.

3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

5. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/ PRESENTATIONS/ QUESTIONS

None.

6. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AND TRANSITIONS FOR 14-25 YEAR OLDS IN HARINGEY

Tina Read (Head of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Transformation at BEH (Barnet, Enfield and Haringey) Mental Health Trust (MHT)) outlined the range of services that were currently available to children and young people under the age of 18.

Trailblazer was based in schools and was part of NHS England's early intervention. Choices was community based and could be accessed by self-referral. Other CAMHS services were accessed through CAMHS Access, which triaged services according to need. There were Core CAMHS teams, which provided support through multi-disciplinary teams. There was also a Health and Well-Being service that was delivered through schools and GPs. In addition, there was also specialist learning disability team and an adolescent outreach team that worked with young people at the higher end of needs.

Partners delivered some services. Open Door provided services to young people up to the age of 25 whilst the Tavistock and Portman provided outreach and assessments for neuro-disability. There was also new provision for crisis response:

- A 24/7 Crisis Line;
- Crisis hubs; and
- North central London out-of-hours nurse led service.

In answer to a question, Tim Miller (Joint Assistant Director of Commissioning (Adults and Children)) stated that the vast majority of funding for mental health came from the NHS. The local authority provided some funding for the Learning Disability service, Open Door and the Tavistock and Portman for their First Step service for looked after children. In answer to another question, Ms Read stated that there was a four week waiting time target for a first appointment but it had been difficult to meet this during the pandemic. In an emergency, the 24/7 helpline could be contacted and the Crisis Hub could see young people in one to four hours. Some parents and young people chose to attend Accident and Emergency instead though. She was aware that waiting times could be long and work was taking place to bring them down.

In answer to a question regarding neuro-developmental assessments, Mr Miller acknowledged that there were long waiting times, particularly in respect of autism, and this had been highlighted in the recent local Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) inspection. Action to remedy this was a key part of the SEND Improvement Plan, which was currently being implemented. Progress was being monitored by both the Department for Education and NHS England.

In answer to another question, Mr Miller stated that there had been considerable investment in autism assessment capacity for the under 11's. Prioritisation was based on level of need and how long that they had been waiting. More support was also being provided to those who were waiting for assessments, through the Markfield Project or Open Door.

In answer to a question regarding how young people accessed mental health services, Ms Read stated that there were a number of ways. There was mental health support available in schools and schools themselves could make referrals. There was also Choices, which was a self-referral service. In addition, there was the Crisis Line.

Once people had made contact, it was the responsibility of services to assist young people in navigating their way around the system. Vicky Murphy, Service Director for Adults, Health and Communities, reported that joint work was taking place to re-launch the service directory, which provided shared information on what services were available locally. Work to map out mental health services for adults was also planned and this would include identifying any gaps. She would be happy to report on the outcome of this.

Gary Passaway, Managing Director for Haringey for BEH MHT, reported that the current workforce was considered sufficient to meet current levels of activity but an increase in demand was anticipated. There was to be a particular focus on hard to recruit roles. Workforce capacity was being addressed across the north central London area and was a continuous process. He was confident that there would be sufficient capacity to meet future challenges.

In answer to another question, Mr Passaway stated that no one on the waiting list was forgotten. There was a rigorous review process and a range of initiatives to support it. Ms Read commented that reducing the waiting list was difficult. It had begun to reduce though but not as quickly as desired. Mr Miller stated that not everyone wished to use NHS or Council services and there was now a digital offer called Kooth that people could access instead and this had proven to be very successful. It could be used while people were waiting for other mental health services or as an alternative to them. In addition, MIND in Haringey provided a wide range of services in the community. Ms Murphy reported that, in adult mental health services, there were currently no young adults waiting for a Care Act assessment. There currently two young adults awaiting Care Act assessments by the learning disability team.

In answer to a question regarding diversity, Mr Miller reported that Kooth had been successful in engaging with BAME communities and take up was greater amongst them than for mainstream CAMHS services. In addition, MIND had formed partnerships with a range of community organisations. The NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression service had also accessed a wide range of communities, had a diverse workforce and could deliver services in community settings and languages.

In response to a question from Councillor Iyngkaran, it was agreed that waiting list data, including the trajectory as well as historical performance, would be shared with the Panels. In response to a question regarding Trailblazer, Ms Read stated that it was part of the NHS's long term plan for CAMHS and involved special teams being based in schools and supporting the whole school community. It aimed to provide a well-developed programme of early intervention. It was not in all schools in Haringey yet but it was planned to extend it in due course.

Ms Read reported on plans for the future. There was recognition that the support system needed to be reconsidered and the THRIVE model had been developed in response to this. It was a needs based model that had been co-created with young people and was based on the principle of them being able to access support at the point of need. It was a system wide response and was crucial to reducing the waiting list. The transformation required had begun to be implemented. The Panels noted that it was not a new service but a different way of working and an overarching

approach. It did not require new funding but all new investment would be directed towards the new model of support.

In answer to a question regarding stigma, Ms Passaway stated that he felt that it was diminishing. Covid had changed circumstances and helped to raise awareness. Services were now trying to help young people at an earlier stage and develop a preventative model. Mark Pritchard (Senior Service Lead (BEH-MHT) felt that there was still a stigma attached to St Ann's Hospital though and efforts were being made to provide services away from the site where possible.

In answer to a question regarding support for those in the Gypsy and Roma communities, Mr Miller stated that some work had recently been undertaken to look at inclusion and support for adults in marginalised groups. He was not aware of any specific work involving the Gypsy and Roma communities though and would report back on this. He also agreed to provide further information on referrals to the London Survivors Gateway. In answer to another question, Ms Read stated that services tried to obtain as much feedback as possible from those using them on their experience and there were a range of outcome measures linked to this. She agreed to come back regarding whether this information could be shared.

In respect of looked after children, Mr Miller stated that the Tavistock and Portman provided an assessment and screening service call First Step and worked alongside the Council's social work team. Support for those placed outside of the borough was provided through First Step Plus. There were also services commissioned from MIND and Hope for the Young. There was more that could be done though and consideration of improvements was taking place.

In answer to a question regarding relationships between partners, Ms Murphy stated that these were much better now. There was daily contact between staff in Adults and the Children and Young People's service. The transitions service had just been redesigned and additional investment put in. There were also good relationships with other partners. Services received feedback on services in multiple ways. Care Act assessments were subject of review and there were also various forums that could provide feedback. Culture was also important as well as ensuring that the right services were being commissioned.

In answer to a question, Ms Murphy stated that the transitions service worked with new adults receiving local authority support and could support them up to the age of 24. Providers of Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered statutory services could only provide support up to the age of 18 though.

Mr Miller reported that the vast majority of 18-25 years olds requiring mental health support received it. There were ways to access support without referral though. It was also possible to access talking therapies for anxiety and depression directly. Mr Pritchard reported that it was known that some people were reluctant to go to their GP regarding mental health concerns and research had been commissioned from the Bridge to find out where such people sought help so that any gaps could be addressed.

Mr Pritchard reported on how adult community mental health services had developed. There were now three Core Teams in the borough, which were aligned with Primary Care networks. The teams included a range of professionals and services. In addition, there was also an Early Intervention in Psychosis team and a Complex Emotional Needs service. However, the bulk of referrals went to the Core Teams. A key aim was to link support to primary care and allocation to teams was based on the location the person's GP. There was also provision for people whose GP was outside of the borough. It was intended that any change of Core Team would be seamless.

In answer to a question, Mr Pritchard stated many young people needed no further help after being supported by CAMHS. However, work was taking place to better identify those who were likely to need to receive ongoing care at an early stage so that a clear transition plan could be put in place. The experiences of those transitioning was being tracked with the intention of ensuring that the process was as smooth as possible. It was noted that there was now a regular meeting that took place with all of the professionals and partners to discuss transition plans. It was acknowledged that transition had not always been undertaken smoothly and the intention was to ensure that no young person fell off the pathway.

Mr Pritchard reported that it had been anticipated that demand for services would increase in the forthcoming years and the additional numbers had been factored in, with clear targets set. Mr Miller stated that there had been a growth in funding to recruit staff to support transition and the needs of 18 to 25 year olds. There would be a 5% year on year growth in the number of beneficiaries. The increased funding would take into account former CAMHS service users who might later need to be re-referred.

In answer to a question regarding support for families, Mr Pritchard stated that there were mental health social workers who could undertake carers assessments and work with families where there were challenges. Support could be provided through a range of services, including those provided by partners, such as housing. Family therapy could be provided by core teams, if required. Ms Murphy stated that there could also be a role for adult social care and Care Act assessments or carers assessments could be undertaken if need be.

The Chair of the Adults and Health Panel reported that Councillors often undertook complex casework and it could be unclear who to refer matters to. Mr Pritchard reported that he met regularly with colleagues in Adult Services to discuss individual cases, including Councillors enquiries. However, it was sometimes difficult to identify who the individuals referred to were as just the name was often not sufficient. Any additional information, such as date of birth, helped with identification. Members stated that action taken in response to their enquiries was not always reported back to them. Mr Passaway agreed to consider further how enquires from Members could be best addressed and feedback from services provided on cases referred by them.

In answer to a question, Mr Miller stated that there was now a Council Preparing for Adulthood strategy and a transitions team to smooth the move to adult social care. There were also closer connections between CAMHS and adults mental health services. There was a Transitions Panel led by the Council, which the Mental Health

Trust also attended. Systems were now in place to ensure better and earlier planning that were not previously in place.

In answer to a question regarding preparation for transition, Ms Murphy reported that the transfer from children's to adults social care was facilitated by the Transitions Team. Dennis Scotland, the Head of Children in Care and Placements, reported that parents and carers were very much involved in plans. The process could go well but it could be less smooth when the pathway was not begun early enough. Co-production was a high priority and would help reduce the level of stress and anxiety. Ms Read reported that there had been co-production with parents and carers on the transfer process from CAMHS to Adult mental health services and they would be happy to discuss this further. It was recognised that it was a period of anxiety and they were striving to do better.

Mr Miller reported that universities were beyond the sphere of influence of local services. Student mental health support was now more focussed and a higher priority though and this had been included in the NHS long-term plan for mental health. However, consideration could be given locally to what more could be done to support young people going into higher education, such as sign posting and providing information on what they might expect at university. Ms Read stated that there was a programme of improvements and this included support for transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services wherever young people might be or were moving to. It was difficult to have influence if a young person was not in the local area but they could, with the young person's consent, liaise with universities ahead of them starting.

Ms Read outlined the young adults' programme that was part of NHS England's long-term plan for mental health services, which focussed on investment and improvement. There were three core areas that had been identified for improvement in the next year:

- Young people transitioning to adult services;
- Delivering care in new and different ways, including community based ones; and
- Supporting young adults coming into services for the first time.

All young people would be tracked from the age of 17 upwards. A number of priorities for future years had been identified. This included support for vulnerable young people including those not accessing services. Work was taking place to gain an understanding of areas where needs were not being met and where support could be improved.

In answer to a question, Mr Pritchard stated that they already received referrals regarding young people who were moving into Haringey to attend university. Where young people moved from Haringey to other areas, mental health services would work with the mental health team in the area that they had moved to as local services were based placed to provide responsive care.

Mr Miller reported that there was a range of additional support available in the community outside of statutory services. Of particular note was the Autism Hub, which had been set up by the Council, was open access and had a young adults offer. There were also several support services that could assist young adults on a variety of matters, including employment and housing support, as part of their wider work, including Connected Communities.

Panel Members felt that all young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans leaving schools should have a clear plan for their ongoing support. This was particularly relevant to those who were not receiving support from CAMHS. Jackie Difolco, Assistant Director for Early Help, Prevention and SEND, stated that this should be covered as part of an annual review of every child and young person's plan. Enhancing the quality and timeliness of annual reviews had been recognised as an area requiring improvement and was part of the SEND Service's current improvement plan and written statement of action. Whilst progress had been made, including increased active involvement of young people in their annual reviews, this was an ongoing area of development.

Ms Read outlined a journey that could typically be undertaken by a young person receiving support for mental health. Mr Passaway reported that the impact of plans would be monitored through both quantitative and qualitative means. It was particularly important to hear directly from young people about their impact.

The Panel acknowledged that the THRIVE model was based on providing support in a different way and that finances had already taken into account an anticipated increase in activity. However, they wished to receive further details of how services would be financed in the next five years as part of further scrutiny of transition. In addition, they requested details of:

- Additional funding there would be for Council services to ensure that necessary support was in place for transition and details of how new initiatives would be monitored so that it could be known whether the changes were working as anticipated;
- Early intervention programmes and how they were being rolled out;
- Action to move adult mental health services provided at St Ann's Hospital into the community, including staffing and funding; and
- The proportions of people who were supported via the telephone compared to those seen in person.

In answer to a question regarding access to services and how this was communicated, Ms Murphy stated that first point of contact for mental health services was through primary care and, in particular, GPs. Other services could be accessed by contacting the Council and there was now a digital offer. Mr Passaway stated that NHS 111 could also be contacted. Communicating what was available was a big priority for NHS services and more work was needed though. The Panel were of the view that access should not be over reliant on IT. Not everyone had access and other were not computer literate or had language difficulties.

In answer to a question on the effectiveness of Trailblazer and how mental health was taught in schools, Ms Read stated that it incorporated a whole school approach and aimed to raise awareness of mental health issues. The THRIVE model also aimed to incorporate a "no wrong door approach" so that people were not expected to be able to navigate their way around services themselves.

AGREED:

1. That waiting list data for CAMHS and adult mental health services, including the current trajectory as well as historical performance, be shared with the Panels;

2. That further information be provided to the Panels on:
 - (a). Specific work to improve the mental health of people in the Gypsy and Roma communities;
 - (b). Referrals to the London Survivors Gateway; and
 - (c). Feedback from service users on their experience of services.

3. That further consideration be given by mental health partners on how enquires from Members could be best addressed and feedback from services provided on cases referred by them;

4. That, as part of the future scrutiny by the Panels of transition from children to adult services, the following information be provided:
 - (a). Details of how mental health services for young people will be financed in the next five years;
 - (b). What additional funding there will be for Council services to ensure that necessary support was in place for transition and details of how new initiatives will be monitored so that it is known whether the changes are working as anticipated;
 - (c). Information on early intervention programmes and how they were being rolled out;
 - (d). Action to move adult mental health services provided at St Ann's Hospital into the community, including staffing and funding; and
 - (e). The proportions of young people who were supported via the telephone compared to those seen in person.

CHAIR: Councillor Pippa Connor

Signed by Chair

Date

**MINUTES OF MEETING Environment and Community Safety
Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Thursday, 15th December, 2022, 6.30
pm**

PRESENT:

Councillors: Scott Emery, Eldridge Culverwell, George Dunstall, Tammy Hymas, Michelle Simmons-Safo (Chair) and Alexandra Worrell

ALSO ATTENDING: Ian Sygrave (Co-optee)

181. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

182. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jogee, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Jobs and Community Cohesion.

183. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

184. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

185. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

The Panel received a deputation on major events in Finsbury Park, from the Friends of Finsbury Park Group (FOFPG). The deputation was introduced by Gina Harkell and Lawrence Singh. The key points of the deputation are summarised as:

- 2022 saw the biggest Wireless Festival so far with half the useable park fenced off from 22nd June - 24th July. 250k people attended over the six days, most of whom were not from Haringey. FOFPG would like to see the Council move away from large scale events and to adopt a more collaborative approach with the local community, to use the space as a unique area promoting biodiversity and offering families a natural outdoor green space to enjoy, play sports and to use the children's playgrounds.

- The Council is consulting on its Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. FOFPG believes a more consultative approach is more in-line with the stated aims of the strategy.
- Only 8% of tickets went to Haringey residents. Most came from outside London. Tickets were £130 – it was suggested that this may have contributed to people trying to surge the entrances to get in for free.
- FOFPG advised that they would like to see the events stopped for three reasons:
 - Public Safety: There was poor crowd control at the park entrance to the festivals on Seven Sisters Road as thousands of festival goers blocked the road outside. It had to be cordoned off by police blocking traffic and the tube station. Using videos, we have shown how close the event came to a tragedy as the crowd surged forward and people were crushed at the front trying to enter the festival. The event resulted in a lot of bad publicity for both Haringey Council and Live Nation in both national and local newspapers and BBC TV. Live Nation has had similar events happen at other festivals it organises and 8 people dies in a Live Nation event in Houston.
 - Environmental damage to the park: Grass was pounded into oblivion, tree branches broken and there was structural damage to drains and kerbs. Wildlife suffered.
 - The negative impact on the community, which has resulting in increasing opposition to these events. The petition being collected by FOFPG has over 2400 signatures.
- Combating the impact of climate change is incompatible with providing large scale festivals. These are more safely provided in purpose built stadiums like the O2 or Wembley.

The following arose during the discussion of the deputation:

- a. The Panel enquired whether the Friends group had an alternative funding proposals to cover the shortfall in income from events, if they were to be stopped. This was felt to be of particular concern given the pressures on existing budgets. In response, the Friends group advised that they felt that Finsbury Park should be funded from the Parks budget, just like every other park. It was felt that parks were a core service offer and key community resource which should be funded just like any other key service. The Friends group set out that the judicial review, clearly set out that the money raised from events had to be spent on Finsbury Park. It was suggested that getting any detailed financial information from the Council was difficult, but that the latest 2020/21 accounts set out that the staffing budget for Finsbury Park was £871k. Ms Harkell suggested that this figure seemed implausible and questioned how much the staff were being paid, given the number of staff employed there.
- b. The Panel sought clarification about how they would like to see the impacts highlighted by the deputation minimised in some way. In response, the deputation party advised that the friends group was not in favour of any of the festivals taking place, particularly as at £130 a ticket, these weren't for local people. The parks should be funded through the revenue budget and they

- would like to see a return to the old days of having local free festivals in the park.
- c. The Panel queried whether there were any community benefits that could be used to make these festivals more accessible to local people, such as free tickets. In response, the friends group advised that they did not think it was possible to have these events in the parks safely, there were too many access points and it was not feasible to employ enough staff to cover them all. The Videos of people climbing over fences and crowd surges were alarming and there were grave concerns for people's safety.
 - d. The Chair thanked the Friends group for their deputation.

RESOLVED

Noted.

186. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting on 14th November be approved as a correct record.

187. PARKS UPDATE

Clerk's note- the Chair agreed to take the presentations for agenda items 7, 8 and 9 together. Questions on these items would then be taken as part of Agenda Item 10 – Cabinet Member Questions.

The Panel received a report which provided the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel with an update on the current performance and work programme within the Parks Team. The report was introduced by Simon Farrow, Head of Parks and Leisure as set out in the addendum reports pack at pages 1-6.

RESOLVED

That the update was noted

188. LEISURE UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation which provided the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel with an update on Haringey physical activity and sport in the borough. The presentation was introduced by Simon Farrow, Head of Parks and Leisure as set out in the addendum reports pack at pages 7-18.

RESOLVED

That the presentation was noted

189. UPDATE ON THE SUMMER MAJOR EVENTS PROGRAMME

190. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER COMMUNITIES AND CIVIC LIFE

The Panel undertook a questions and answer session with Cllr Julie Davies, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Civic Life regarding the parks and leisure elements of her portfolio. Questions from Panel members on agenda items 7,8 & 9 were also incorporated into this part of the meeting. The following arose as part of this Q&A session:

- a. The Panel sought clarification around new sporting equipment and also what was happening with the tennis courts at Priory Park. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that resurfacing work was due to take place on a number of tennis courts in the borough and that overall, the Cabinet Member was pleased with the amount of investment that they had been able to put into New River and in terms of new equipment. Officers advised that they were working with the FA on a national scheme about improving local football pitches. It was hoped that they would lead to some additional investment in Haringey. More cover had also been put in place for tractor drivers to support sports pitch maintenance. In relation to the tennis courts at Priority Park, officers advised that there was a contract in place with Georgians who provided private coaching lessons on the courts, but that they also give free lessons to local residents. The Council was working with the LTA to improve the tennis court facilities and it was hoped that there would be two new courts and two mini-courts along with floodlighting, Planning Permission dependent. In general, the Cabinet Member advised that Haringey was down on swimming lanes and pitch space, but that the administration was seeking to improve this.
- b. The Panel sought clarification about what was happening with the Haringey Walks campaign. The Panel also enquired what the Cabinet was doing to tackle health inequalities across the borough. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged the need to tackle health inequalities, especially post pandemic, and advised that this was taking place over several different portfolios. It was acknowledged that there was some work needed to improve the facilities at leisure centres and to increase participation levels, particularly in the east of the borough. Officers advised that Haringey Walks was still very much active and that 243 walks were delivered in the current year, with 2000 people taking part. Officers advised that they welcomed the Panel's input as they developed the new physical activity & sport strategy next year. Part of this discussion, it was suggested, could be around where to target financial resources to get the best results i.e. Haringey walks or by funding leisure centre concessions.
- c. The Panel raised concerns about the Finsbury Park boundary review and the stated aim of making the park more permeable. It was questioned why Sustrans were involved in this review and why the Council was starting from a point of view that the park should be more permeable. A previous EVA conducted by the police concluded that the park should be made less permeable and that gates should be locked. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the review was something she inherited as Cabinet Member, and that she welcomed increasing active travel rates. The Cabinet Member advised that she took safety issues in Finsbury Park very seriously, including VAWG. It was suggested that the lighting in Finsbury Park had made a significant difference to the safety of park users. It was also suggested that similar schemes in New York and Boston had made their parks safer by increasing the

- number of entrance and exit points The Cabinet Member advised that the review would involve consultation with the local community and that the police would also be heavily involved in this. Any safety concerns raised by the police would be taken on board fully. The Cabinet Member set out that the park was very large and had around 8 entrance points. It was suggested that there was a discussion to be had about whether all of these entrances were needed and whether it might be safer to have more exit points in certain places. The Cabinet Member assured Members that whilst there may be a working assumption that fewer boundaries could make the park safer, if this was not the case then they would not do it. Officers agreed that the ultimate outcome had to be a safer park and that there was no fixed agenda on how to take this forward.
- d. The Panel queried what more could be done to reduce noise nuisance from large events at Finsbury Park. In response, officers advised that noise nuisance was managed through the licensing process and that the licence set out how loud the sound could be off-site. There were eight monitoring sights and these did not change from event to event. Officers acknowledged the point made about different events being located in different parts of the park and the effect this had on noise in certain parts of the borough. The noise for each event was actively monitored and there were reports available for each event.
 - e. The Panel sought assurances about what was being done to hold Fusion to account to ensure that they provided the services they were supposed to deliver. Given Fusion's financial issues, the Panel also sought assurances around what would happen if they could not afford to continue to provide leisure services in Haringey. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged a level of dissatisfaction with the service provided and the fact that certain facilities were out of action. The Panel was advised that officers were pushing fusion hard to resolve the issues and that meetings had taken place with the Chief Executive of the national company to try and resolve it. The Cabinet Member advised that she would continue to assess how to best take this issue forwards.
 - f. In response to a question about provision of facilities for children in Finsbury Park, officers advised that there had been £759k spent on children's play equipment over the last three years, including the creation of the accessible play space. Officers were working with the Friends group about further improvements including upgrading the skate park. The Cabinet Member set out that investment into play equipment would continue, including in smaller parks and green spaces.

RESOLVED

Noted

191. SCRUTINY OF THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET AND 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/2028

The Panel received a covering report with a number of appendices, that set out the Council's draft budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/2028 proposals relating to the Panel's remit. The report was introduced by John O'Keefe, Head of Finance (Capital, Place & Economy) a set out in the agenda pack at pages 17 to 94. Cllr Davies, Cabinet Member for Communities & Civic Life was

present, along with Cllr Chandwani, Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality and Resident Services, and Cllr Hakata, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment and Transport, and Deputy Leader of the Council. A number of officers from the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate were also present.

By way of introduction, the Panel was advised that the report contained a summary of the draft budget proposals that were submitted to Cabinet the previous week. The proposals related to the revenue and capital General Fund budget as well as the HRA revenue and capital budgets, and the Dedicated Schools Grant. The report noted that at present there was a £3.1m budget gap and that this was after circa £5.5m of additional one off funding (reserves) had been utilised. A final MTFs report would be presented to Cabinet in February, which would reflect an updated financial position, having taken in to account the final levies and funding precepts from the Mayor, as well as the outcome of the local government funding settlement. The Panel noted that the Council continued to maintain a wide ranging capital programme. There was around £2.5m in growth budget provision; £490k of non-delivery of savings; and £6.6m of new savings, within the Environment and Neighbourhoods budget,

The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification around the increased investment in the boroughs parks and streets identified in the report, and whether this was linked to a reduction in funding from TfL. In response, the Cabinet Member for Tackling Inequality and Residents Services advised that TfL's finances had been hit hard by the pandemic and that its funding settlement from the government was in a state of flux. It was noted that TfL funded transport related things, such as crossings and road safety schemes, rather than Parks. In Haringey, TfL were also supposed to fund maintenance of TfL managed roads and pavements (TfL Red Routes), but this had not happened due their ongoing funding problems. In summary, the Panel was advised that the authority was clear on the funding it would receive from TfL for this year but did not know about what would be received in future years.
- b. The Panel sought clarification about the reducing trend of expenditure for particular schemes within the capital budget. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this reflected the fact that earlier tranches of investment would reduce the need for ongoing spend. The example given was replacing the borough's street lighting and the fact that this should last for 30 years, the investment was front-loaded and so less investment was required in subsequent years of that capital scheme. Capital schemes were profiled over a five year period in the MTFs.
- c. In relation to a question on self-financing capital schemes and instances where these may proceed despite not meeting their costs, officers advised that each scheme would produce its own business case and if this business case did not add up then Cabinet would be asked to review this and make a decision as to whether they would like to proceed. This was usually done in the context of where there were policy outcomes or drivers attached to that scheme. Examples of self-financing schemes in the E&N budget were given as Finsbury Park; the parks vehicles budget, upgrading these produced lower fleet running costs; and carbon reduction of parks buildings.
- d. In relation to saving EN_SAV_001, the Panel sought clarification about the savings expected as a result of LTNs and School Streets programmes and how

- those figures had been calculated. In response, officers advised that the income had been estimated based on their experience of School Streets in the borough and also LTNs going live. The modelling assumed a higher level of compliance and reduced income as these schemes became embedded. The AD for Direct Services emphasised that the driver for these schemes was not about income and that increased compliance was what was being sought.
- e. In relation to a follow-up question on the above mentioned saving, and how increased debt recovery of parking fines would support the Council's ethical debt policy, the Cabinet Member advised that these were two separate things. The Council had delegated legal powers to issue a PCN, rather than pursue the case in court and would continue to do so. The ethical debt policy was set up to help people with the cost of living crisis where they had accumulated debt through no fault of their own, such as they could not pay their Council Tax, rather than were they had committed a criminal offense. In relation to a further follow-up question, the Cabinet Member advised that debt recovery would be increased through the new IT system and the ability to cross reference data checks to ensure that notices were issued to the correct people.
 - f. In relation to EN_SAV_001, the panel sought clarification about the new 4-5 area Heavy Goods Vehicle Restriction Zones CCTV Enforcement (£574K saving) and whether this meant that the Council was reducing HGV enforcement. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that they reviewed the location of the cameras every year to see if their continued presence was justified in light of the number of contraventions. The Panel were assured that there were no plans to relocate the HGV enforcement cameras in Harringay ward due to low levels of compliance there. The saving in questions related to the creation of four or five more HGV zones in the borough and was an income generating measure.
 - g. In relation to a question about current in-year overspends, officers advised that some of these had been corrected through base budget corrections put into next years' budget. Officers were working a number of work streams to reduce overspends.
 - h. In response to a question about what was being done to meet the budget gap, officers advised that the things happening between now and February should cover that budget gap but that at present, it was just not possible to say for certain as there were a lot of things that were beyond the Council's control.
 - i. The Panel queried what was included in the £1.3m saving related to the waste saving review. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this saving was not due until 2025/26 and so the proposal was still at a very embryonic stage. The Council was currently engaging its residents to see what they would like to see as part of any future waste services contract. The administration would also need to determine the future model for any such arrangements, and whether this would be outsourced, insourced, or even a hybrid. It was suggested that there may be savings from combining a number of contracts held across the Council, with Veolia.
 - j. In relation to the previous saving PL20/9, the panel requested an update on getting Spurs to pay match day cleaning costs. In response, the Cabinet member advised that the wider impact from Spurs was covered under the Local Area Management Plan (LAMP). The Cabinet Member advised that talks with Spurs on paying match day cleaning costs paused due to Covid and needed to

- restart. It was suggested that existing arrangements were insufficient and so it was not just about getting Spurs to pay for what was being done now.
- k. In relation to the previous saving PL20/17, the Panel requested clarification about whether the number of subscriptions were decreasing or whether it was the overall volume of waste. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the number of subscriptions was increasing but that the volume of waste could be down due to a very hot summer. Subscriptions were at full capacity in some areas but not in others, so work was continuing about how best to resource this.
 - l. The Panel commented on the extent to which buy-to-let landlords were selling up and queried the extent to which this had been factored into the income assumptions made on private sector licensing schemes. In response, officers advised that it was a five-year scheme and that income and expenditure would have to balance, so if there was a drop in income than the expenditure would have to be reduced. Officers set out that the savings came from efficiencies from having two schemes in place, as well as a possible increase in fees. Officers advised that they had not seen any evidence of a reduction in take up from the schemes and had received 9k application to date from 20k expected applications over the whole five year period.
 - m. In relation to EN_SAV_004, the panel sought clarification about not recruiting to existing vacancies within the parks service, as well as the reduction in the small green space improvement plan. In response, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Civic Life advised that this related to not recruiting to a vacant dedicated weed control post in parks. The post was to operate new machinery for removing weeds without using pesticides. The machinery would be used by other staff across the parks service instead. Officers advised that was only a two year scheme and that it would go into the budget in April 2023 and would be come out again from 2025/26.
 - n. In relation to concerns about the lights being left on at Stroud Green Primary School all night, Members were advised that this is something that should be taken up with the school, and the Head Teacher, directly.
 - o. In relation to parks and leisure income efficiencies (EN_SAV_004), the Panel queried about rent reviews for café's in parks. In response, officers advised that these took place every five years and that when this took place for individual cafes would be determined by where they were in the five-year cycle. The value of the business was taken into account when reviews were undertaken. There were two types of lease in parks, commercial leases and community leases, which received a 40% reduction. Commercial lease rent calculations would be based on market rates for park cafe, rather than a café on a high street.
 - p. The Panel agreed to put forward a recommendation to Cabinet about seeking assurances that the authority would be engaging robustly with Tottenham Hotspur F.C., to ensure that it paid its fair share of the clean-up costs from match days and other event days.
 - q. The Panel also recommended that, in relation to EN_SAV_00, Cabinet reconsider the part of this saving relating to not recruiting to existing vacancies within the parks service. The Panel would like to see the weed control operative post recruited to and that net £45k saving found from elsewhere.

RESOLVED

That the Panel considered and provided recommendations to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, on the Council's 2023/24 Draft Budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/2028 proposals relating to the Panel's remit.

192. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

The work programme was noted.

193. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

194. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

16th March 2023

CHAIR: Councillor Michelle Simmons-Safo

Signed by Chair

Date

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MINUTES OF MEETING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD JANUARY 2023

PRESENT:

Councillors: Makbule Gunes (Chair), Anna Abela, Lester Buxton, Lotte Collett, Sue Jameson and Mary Mason

Co-opted Members: Yvonne Denny and Lourdes Keever (Church representatives) and Venassa Holt (Parent Governor representative)

38. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members to item one on the agenda regarding filming at the meeting and Members noted the information contained therein.

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None. The Chair welcomed Venassa Holt who had recently been appointed as a Parent Governor representative on the Panel.

40. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

42. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

43. MINUTES

It was noted that the webcast of the last meeting of the Panel, on 7 November 2022, did not appear to be available on-line. It was agreed that this would be rectified.

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 7 November 2022 be approved.

44. SCRUTINY OF THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET AND 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/2028

Josephine Lyseight (Head of Finance (People)) introduced the 2023/24 draft budget for 2023/24 and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy in respect of children and young people. She reported that the proposals had been developed before both the government's Autumn Statement and the Local Government Finance Settlement. The implications of these for Haringey were currently being analysed by officers. The proposals included additional growth of £14.8 million, £4.9 million of which was for Children's Services.

The proposals to make revenue savings of £1.5 million were in addition to existing targets. £1 million of this would come from improved commissioning. There was also a growth proposal to add £1 million to the budget in order to mitigate the effects of inflation on commissioning. It was also proposed to save a further £0.5 million through extension of existing savings programmes. This involved continuing to work with young people to support their needs and prepare them for stepping down from high cost placements to placements with families. The Children's Service had so far proven to be exceptionally effective in delivering savings targets.

The Panel noted that the number of children being taken into care nationally had gone up and this was often due to mental health issues. Beverley Hendricks (Assistant Director for Social Care) reported that an increase of people with mental health needs was being seen in Haringey. There was demand modelling and a LAC sufficiency strategy and this had focussed on identifying children who could no longer be cared for in their home and planning with partners regarding early intervention to prevent needs from escalating. The Panel asked whether the proposals to reduce the number of high cost placements by greater use of foster care were realistic. Ms Hendricks reported that not all foster carers lived in the borough. Recruitment of foster carers was being extended to communities that it had not been previously possible to engage with. She was confident that recruitment targets could be met. Targets for had been met through schemes like supporting foster carers to build additional bedrooms.

Ms Lyseight outlined the growth proposals, which amounted to circa £4.9 million. There would be additional funding for:

- The increased cost of social care placements;
- The rising demand and cost of SEND transport;
- 2022/23 base budget pressures;
- Continuation of the extension of free school meals;
- Rising Green Youth Centre; and
- The Social Workers in Schools scheme.

There was one additional proposal for capital funding and this was for the Safety Valve programme, The majority of the scheme would be funded by the High Needs Capital Allocation Fund and an application made to the Department for Education (DfE) Safety Valve Capital Programme that was pending approval would assist in the delivery of associated revenue budget savings. Approval of the Council's bid was still awaited.

In answer to a question regarding Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Brian Smith (Schools Finance Manager) stated that it was split into four blocks. These were all calculated differently in a way that was determined by the government. The government for the schools block had provided additional funding of £7 million. However, there had been a reduction of 2.5% in the central schools services block,

which had also been impacted by falling school rolls. The funding helped fund statutory services that were undertaken by the Council, such as school admissions and education welfare. There had been an increase in the early years block due to higher unit numbers. This had arisen due to more children being in early years compared with numbers during the height of the Covid pandemic. There had been an increase of 10% in the high needs block. The additional funding was in recognition of the additional responsibilities for special educational needs given to local authorities since 2014.

Ms Lyseight reported that the current deficit in the DSG was shown separately. All local authorities had been given special dispensation to do this in acknowledgement of the significant pressures that there were arising from the high needs funding block. The Safety Valve programme would allow the Council to bring reduce the deficit and was therefore welcome. In the absence of the special dispensation, the overspend for Children's Services would be approximately £24 million.

The Panel raised the issue of consultation on the budget, which was currently taking place. It was felt that this needed to be a meaningful process and should not be reliant on the use of questionnaires, which often prompted limited returns. It was also felt that greater attention needed to be given to the equalities impact of proposals and that Equalities Impact Assessments should provide a greater level of detail than was currently the case.

In answer to a question regarding funding for early years in the DSG, Nick Hewlett (Acting Assistant Director for Schools and Learning) reported that funding was based on the number of hours provided. Numbers of children in early years settings had been going up. However, the challenge for schools was the inflexibility of what they were able to offer which often did not meet the needs of working parents.

In response to a question on where the greatest levels of risk lay, Ms Lyseight stated that these came from matters that the Council was not in a position to control. These included the cost of living crisis, inflation and high energy costs. In addition, there was also the increasing costs of care, which the service was trying to mitigate through savings. Jackie Difolco (Assistant Director for Early Help, Prevention and SEND) stated that reducing the overspend within SEND transport budget was a significant risk as this was a statutory duty and there were now higher numbers of children and young people eligible for travel assistance. New policies and actions had been agreed to mitigate against budgetary pressures and she was confident that these would be effective over time. Ms Hendricks stated that in social care there was a risk arising from market factors. The Council was very reliant on private sector providers for placements and they had been subject to pressures from inflation and the cost of living. They had raised their charges in response to this without negotiation. Work was taking place to develop closer relationships with providers in response, particularly those providing high quality placements for niche or acute needs. There were also risks arising from the volume of unaccompanied asylum seekers, which was an issue across Europe. The Home Office had indicated that it wished to work with local authorities in a different way and was increasing the levy that was provided. However, the levy did not take fully into account the acuity of needs. The Panel requested access to the regular quarterly updates of the risk register for the service.

In answer to a question regarding the level of inflation, Ms Lyseight stated that the budget proposals had assumed a level of 5%. However, the current level was higher than this although it was estimated that it would reduce to 7.4% in due course. The budget proposals would be reviewed in the light of this and decisions may be needed to address the increased level to balance the budget. In response to a question regarding whether the proposed growth funding of £1 million for SEND transport would be sufficient, she stated that any increase to this would need to be balanced by savings of the same amount unless additional funding could be found from elsewhere.

Ms Difolco reported that the main pressure on SEND transport arose from increased fuel costs, which had increased from 11% to 42% within one year. Mitigating actions included moving from a one year contract to three year contracts with providers to ensure stability, continuity and best value. Quarterly reviews had also been built into the contract monitoring cycle to enable a flexible response to accommodate increasing and decreasing costs. Fuel costs were expected to decrease.

In response to a question regarding the affordability of the capital programme, Ms Lyseight reported that it constituted a significant investment. Some of it was externally funded and efforts were being made to maximise the amount from these sources. Some was self-financed and involved borrowing. It was hoped that at least some of the investments would lead to revenue savings and these would be sought to help pay back borrowing. The capital programme would be reviewed annually and closely monitored for its impact on revenue costs.

The Panel made the following comments regarding the draft budget proposals:

- Consultation with residents and stakeholders on budget proposals in future years should aim to be more meaningful, reach a wider range of people and provide an enhanced opportunity for them to influence proposals;
- In view of the changeable external environment, external risks and measures to mitigate them needed to be monitored rigorously so that any changes could be responded to in a timely manner. In particular, the budgetary impact of the Safety Valve programme needed to be closely monitored. The Panel requested that this be included in the regular quarterly finance updates to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- The equalities impact of specific budget proposals should be outlined in greater depth in future years in order to provide Members with a clearer understanding of them and copies of Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) provided for information.

AGREED:

1. That the Panel recommend:

- (a) That consultation with residents and stakeholders on budget proposals aims to be more meaningful, reach a wider range of people and provide a greater opportunity for them to influence proposals;
- (b) That in view of the changeable external environment, external risks and measures to mitigate them be monitored rigorously so that any changes can be responded to quickly;

- (c) That the impact of the Safety Valve programme be closely monitored and that this be included in the regular quarterly finance updates reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
 - (d) That the equalities impact of specific budget proposals should be outlined in greater depth in future years in order to provide Members with a clearer understanding of them and copies of Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) provided for information.
2. That the regular quarterly updates of the risk register for the service be shared with the Panel.

45. HARINGEY SAFETY VALVE UPDATE

Jackie Difolco, Assistant Director for Early Help, Prevention and SEND, reported that the High Needs Block recovery plan had evolved into the Safety Valve programme. Updates had previously been received on the plan, which aimed to reduce the overspend and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. A report had been made to the September Cabinet meeting on proposals to enter the Safety Valve programme and these had been endorsed. If no action was taken, there would be a deficit of £78 million by 2027/28.

There was strong support from Cabinet for the proposed programme, which included strong oversight and scrutiny. It would be the biggest current savings programme by the Council. There were three work streams associated with the programme - Demand Management, Effective Commissioning and Leadership and Governance. If successful, the programme would lead to a surplus of £1.6 million in 2027/28 and a reduction of the high needs deficit to £30 million. The savings made would be £48 million over five years. The Demand Management programme would lead to a reduction of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans of 611, putting Haringey in line with the average for other London boroughs.

Capital proposals had been developed that would reduce unit costs through the development of in borough provision for an additional 118 places for children and young people within mainstream education settings. A review of bandings and top ups would also be undertaken and action would be taken ensure that there were effective commissioning arrangements. A large number of projects were now taking an early intervention approach, supporting schools and developing a graduated response to meet demand and reduce the need for specialist support. There would be strong partnership arrangements to create shared ownership and change the culture of the SEND system in Haringey. Ms Difolco provided examples of some of the projects with the three workstreams as well as details of the savings that would accrue from all of them in each year.

The proposals had been submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) in October. Feedback had now been received that the proposals might need to be revisited in the light of the announcement of the new budget settlement. They were being reviewed with finance colleagues but it was likely that the overall proposals would still remain the same and a request that the £30 million deficit be written off following successful delivery of the programme would still be made. Work with partners to implement the

proposals had already begun. Once approval from the DfE had been obtained, communication and engagement plans would be developed further. Robust governance processes had been developed and the Schools Forum had agreed to the transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs block to reduce the overspend. Schools were very supportive of the programme as they knew that it would improve outcomes. There was a Safety Valve Steering Group that had oversight of the programme including relevant Cabinet Members.

In answer to a question regarding what success would look like, she stated that primarily savings would need to be achieved and there would be quarterly finance targets that would need to be achieved. The work being undertaken was work that the Council should, in any case, be looking to undertake. The aim was that when the projects started to deliver, there would be an increase in in-borough provision, more early intervention and a more confident and competent multi agency work force. There would be both soft and finance outcomes. There was a plan on a page for each project that provided detail of the savings as well as outcomes and it was agreed that a summary of these be shared with the Panel in the next stage of engagement.

Panel Members expressed concern at the lack of school governors on the Steering Group. Many schools were struggling at the moment and some were in serious financial deficit. The proposed programme could have a negative impact. In particular, schools needed EHC plans in order obtain intervention. Parents and carers in the more deprived areas of the borough were less able to exert pressure bring about action.

Ms Difolco stated that the programme had been informed by the SEND strategy, the Written Statement of Action and responses to consultation. In addition, a detailed report had been made to the Schools Forum. Headteachers on the Forum had raised similar concerns to the Panel but also recognised the need to act. A similar report had also been made to chairs of school governing bodies, where the proposals had been well received. The programme was not just concerned with finance issues but also the need to improve outcomes. It would have been necessary to undertake the work irrespective of the programme and it had already begun as part of the High Needs Block recovery plan. As an example, it should not be the case that children have to wait until they have an EHC plan to obtain help with speech and language and one of the projects would involve training the multi-disciplinary work force to be able to assist at an earlier stage. Good feedback had been received from the DfE on all of the projects and they were not dissimilar to ones being undertaken by other local authorities.

Councillor Brabazon, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families, stated that local authorities had been made an offer that they were unable to refuse by the government. If school governors did not feel that they had been sufficiently well briefed on the programme, she was happy to meet with them again. There was a systemic problem that there was insufficient money for SEND and the government was incentivising local authorities to make changes and offering to write off deficits in return. Irrespective of this, it should not be necessary for children to wait for EHC plans for interventions and the changes necessary were overdue. For example, there needed to be a lot more universal provision for speech and language therapy. The direction was consistent with work that was already begin done in response to the

written statement of action. The programme represented a big cultural change and a real opportunity to bring about change. She understood concerns regarding less articulate or assertive parents not getting as much support and this was shared by those across the partnership. It was essential for the interests of children and schools that the programme worked though.

Ms Difolco agreed to refer the suggestion that the chair of a school governing body be added to the Safety Valve Steering Group to the group for consideration. There were over 2600 children with an EHC plan in Haringey, which was higher than the average for other London boroughs and there was an overspend of £24 million. She reassured Panel Members that if children needed a plan, they would receive one as this was a statutory duty. All of the relevant background papers and reports regarding the transformation of SEND were available on the Councils SEND Local Offer website and a link to these would be shared with members.

In answer to a question regarding the lack of speech and language therapists, Ms Difolco stated that she was aware that there was a shortage and the time frame for targets involving them had been extended in response. In addition, one project involved the recruitment of speech and language assistants which would reduce reliance on specialist therapists. The target of 611 for reductions in the number of EHC plans did not only relate to early intervention and would also be met by revising plans, with some being ceased where they were no longer deemed necessary. In answer to another question regarding personal transport budgets, she reported that very few parents currently had these and this was an area that needed further development. She recognised that the SV programme was very ambitious but it was nevertheless the right thing to do.

AGREED:

1. That the one page summaries of each project to be undertaken as part of the Safety Valve be shared with the Panel in the next stage of engagement; and
2. That it be recommended that school governing bodies be represented on the Safety Valve Steering Group.

46. HARINGEY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT 2022

James Page, the Chief Executive of Haringey Education Partnership, provided an update on test and exam attainment. The current data was the first nationally validated data that there had been since 2019. There had been an overall reduction in attainment. There were gaps in early years and primary, where there had not been any changes to grading or assessment. In secondary schools, higher grades had been obtained but was reflective of a change in the baseline and performance had actually declined. There had been an impact from Covid and the lost learning arising from it.

Haringey's relative performance had been very positive with improved standings compared to other London boroughs and nationally. In early years, the percentage achieving Good Learning and Development had declined by 4% but the decline elsewhere had been higher and this had allowed Haringey to improve its position in

the top quartile in London. There was a similar picture in the percentage of children passing their Phonics test. In Key Stage 1, the percentage reaching the expected standard for Reading, Writing and Maths was also down but not as much as elsewhere and this had enabled Haringey to almost reach the London average. In Key Stage 2, the percentage reaching the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths had only declined very slightly whilst elsewhere the decline was 5% in London and 6.5% nationally. This had enabled Haringey to reach the London average for the very first time. In the Attainment 8 measure of GCSE, Haringey had risen higher above the national average, which was especially welcome with the return of exam based assessment. The borough had slipped below the average during the period when assessment was by teacher assessment. In addition, the attainment gap for Black Caribbean and Turkish young people for GCSE had also reduced. Finally, A Level results continued to be above the London average. There had therefore been strong performance all the way from early years to post 16. Top priorities for development were closing further the attainment gaps for Black Caribbean young people at GCSE, for Turkish and Kurdish young people at Key Stage 2 and for EAL students at both points.

In answer to a question regarding the comparatively low levels of attainment for applied general qualifications at Key Stage 5, Mr Page stated that this was probably due to a range of factors. At post 16, more than half of young people went to providers who were out of borough and this was particularly true of those in the east of the borough. There was also strong A Level provision in the west of the borough. It was likely that it was a selection issue and that a comparatively large proportion those that remained came from the lower attaining cohort. He would nevertheless check with the data. In answer to a question regarding the impact of Covid, he reported that HEP and the Council had worked with schools to bring them together during the pandemic. This enabled them to focus on remote learning and share best practice, as well as maintain a focus on school improvement. In addition, schools had been inclusive and had provided tutoring and support. Support had been provided to them on a range of issues by HEP.

The Panel noted that there had been an influx of children with EAL and, at the moment, many were struggling to make progress and asked about the support that was provided for them. Mr Page stated that there were a number of things in place but acknowledged that more needed to be done to enable them to achieve as much as elsewhere. Schools had been working with providers such as the Flash Academy, who assisted them with teaching and learning support and a lot of good work was done on vocabulary at Key Stage 2. Work was being taking place to support schools to further develop parental involvement and, in particular, build a better understanding of different communities. Consideration was being given to how support could be improved further though although it was not always easy to determine what would make a difference.

In answer to a question, Mr Page stated that the different communities that came under the "other white" category were separately tracked. However, the DfE set the overall categories and these were not necessarily those that would be chosen locally. The performance of traveller groups was tracked but the numbers of them were very small, as was the case nationally. He was not aware of any specific work that schools were undertaking with them, other than general inclusion work. Data was kept on the

performance of children from eastern European countries. There were a range of outcomes but Bulgarians were not performing as well as other groups. It was important to note that it was not possible to dictate to schools how they addressed these issues and they had developed their own systems and methods. A large proportion of children with EAL were nevertheless highly proficient in English. Support could be provided by parents in many ways. In particular, listening to children reading was particularly effective and this did not necessarily need to be in English.

The Panel felt that there were a lot of demands on schools. A lot of parents of children from EAL communities struggled initially and there needed to be programmes to support them, including induction. It was important to engage and involve them. Children from EAL communities were particularly disadvantaged if they joined schools late in the year, especially if they were required to sit formal exams. It was felt that more could be done to provide support for parents. It was noted that some schools had successfully employed bilingual staff who were able to speak to children and parents in their mother tongue. However, many children were eager to speak more English at home and schools were engaging with parents regarding this.

Mr Page emphasised that many EAL children made excellent progress. The racial equity work that had taken place between the Council and schools in the borough had contributed to an understanding of inclusive culture and the development of systems to respond to needs.

47. SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING

Nick Hewlett, Interim Assistant Director of Schools and Learning, reported that the Panel's review on the Haringey Family of Schools had made specific reference to the impact of the reduction in demand for school places. This was having a large impact on the sustainability of schools and their ability to respond to the range of demands that were placed upon them.

Nick Shasha, School Place Planning Lead, reported that the Annual School Place Planning report was behind much of the action that was taking place to address this issue. The peak years for demand for primary school places were 2012-14, when there were over 3,000 first place reception preferences made. There had been a gradual decline since then and this figure had gone down to around 2,500. There had already been a number of temporary and permanent reductions in the number of entry forms in several schools but more still needed to be done to reduce the number of surplus places. Discussions and consultation was taking place regarding reductions in the Planned Admission Number (PAN) at a number of schools. There were two key guidelines behind these:

- Parental preference would not be undermined; and
- Schools could immediately revert back to their previous PAN should local demand warrant it.

The latest school place planning report stated that the projected annual demand for reception places would be 2,600 by the end of the decade so there was unlikely to be any change in the near future. It was felt that the current decisions were well based on the information available currently. Recent National Office for Statistics data had also continued to show a reduction in the birth rate. In respect of secondary schools,

there had been an upward trend in demand for places but this had now tapered off. Whilst there was likely to be surplus places in future, this was not anticipated to be as large as for primaries and the need to address the issue was therefore not as pressing.

In answer to a question, Mr Shasha stated that the reductions in demand for places were due to a number of factors including the high cost of housing, Covid, Brexit and a long term decline in the birth rate. The reductions had occurred over a number of years. Mr Hewlett stated that the impact on schools would be considerable, particularly on their finances. There would be a need to have some challenging conversations with a number of them regarding this, including the diocesan authorities. The issues were particularly challenging for smaller schools and there now a lot more schools that were one form entry.

In answer to a question, Mr Shasha stated that the trends were not unique to Haringey and were also being experienced in neighbouring boroughs. Mr Hewlett stated that, although there were significant housing developments taking place in the borough, these would probably not make much difference. Some schools would benefit but not all.

The Panel noted that schools within geographical clusters met together from time-to-time. These were felt to be useful and more were requested. It was also noted that Catholic schools in the borough were currently undertaking due diligence regarding conversion to academies. Mr Hewlett responded that it was important that schools met together to collaborate on addressing the drop in demand for places. It would provide an opportunity to explore what might make them more sustainable. Some smaller schools were performing very well and good practice could be shared. Staff in many schools were staying in post for longer, which meant that they were more expensive to employ and this was proving a challenge for schools. A number had made proposals to restructure in response. He was aware of what was occurring with Catholic schools in the borough and had spoken to the Diocese regarding it.

The Panel noted that one school had responded to the drop in admissions by setting up a class purely for SEND children, who had thrived by being in a smaller class. Mr Hewlett commented that he was aware of the arrangements being made for SEND children at the school in question. However, inclusivity needed to be maintained and the process managed carefully. One of the aims of the Safety Valve programme was to keep more SEND children in Haringey schools. More SEND children staying in the borough meant more money for schools and therefore benefitted all children.

48. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) PEER CHALLENGE - OUTCOME

Ms Hendricks reported on the outcome of the recent Peer Challenge that had been undertaken on children's social care within the borough by a team from the Local Government Association (LGA). This had been undertaken in November 2022 and its final report was now awaited. Peer challenges were undertaken by invitation from local authorities and this had been done in preparation for Ofsted inspection. The challenge had been an extensive process, including reviews of documents, data and case files, interviews and focus groups. In addition, there had been observation of practice. The scope of the challenge had been wide ranging.

A number of strengths had been identified by the team. In particular, the Early Help Panel had been found to be well attended and the social workers in school scheme had been shown to have an impact. There was also a greater range of services that were available now to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which was found to be well resourced and structured. There were a number of areas in respect of the MASH and the Front Door that were identified for further consideration. These included reviewing the contribution of partners to the MASH and governance arrangements and developing live data reports. In respect of permanency planning, senior leaders were found to be committed to this. The Foster to Adopt approach also promoted early permanency. They were also impressed by the quality of special guardianship assessments that were undertaken. Amongst areas identified for further consideration were the additional capacity in permanency planning so that it was considered across the spectrum. The workforce was identified as a strength and they were seen as passionate and committed. Consideration was recommended to responding to areas where there was higher staff turnover and reflecting the reasons for this in the workforce strategy action plan. The voice of the child was seen as an area of particular strength. Evidence was found that children were listened to and that their input shaped services. It was felt though that consideration should be given to strengthening the evidence that of the child's voice being used to influence plans. Leadership was seen as a strength, with a permanent, stable and committed leadership team.

Ms Hendricks reported that a 'Getting to Excellence Board', was to be established and there would be a range of activities developed in response to this, many of which would require the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. This would include developing further the political engagement and there would be a range of activities in support of this, such as training for Members. Panel Members would be requested to be involved as part of this.

In answer to a question, Ms Hendricks reported that one area of concern that was identified was infrastructure. It was felt that the environment needed to be created where practice would thrive. The Cabinet Member stated that the challenge had confirmed that children's social care was not just the responsibility of the Children and Young People's Service. The infrastructure and external issues that could impact on care services were also significant. There was a very important role for the Panel and the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee in asking challenging questions.

49. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

It was noted that it was unlikely that the proposed review on physical activity and sport could be completed by the end of the current municipal year. Panel Members stated that they wished to look in detail at the issue of children and housing. There was an overarching review of housing taking place and a scrutiny review on this matter would be able to feed into it.

It was noted that it would take time to develop a scope and terms of reference for this and that it would also unlikely to be possible to complete a review on this by the end of the year. Physical activity and sport had also been identified as an area for review in response to feedback from young people who had attended the Scrutiny Café. It was

therefore agreed that the review on physical activity and sport would proceed as planned and that a scope and terms of reference for a review on children and housing be developed for discussion at the next meeting of the Panel. An informal meeting between the Chair and relevant officers would be arranged to facilitate the development of this.

AGREED:

1. That the draft scope and terms of reference for the proposed review on physical activity and sport be agreed and recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
2. That the scope and terms of reference for the proposed review on housing and children be developed and submitted to the next meeting of the Panel.

CHAIR: Councillor Makbule Gunes

Signed by Chair

Date

**MINUTES OF MEETING Housing, Planning and Development
Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Monday, 12th December, 2022, 6.30 -
9.30 pm**

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Dawn Barnes, Mark Blake, Harrison-Mullane, Hymas,
Khaled Moyeed, Matt White (Chair) and Adje**

86. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

87. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

88. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

90. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

The Panel received a public question from Alex Davies on behalf of the senior leadership and governing body of Chestnuts Primary School, in relation to the St Ann's development:

How will our pupils and their families be protected from the increase in pollution and vehicle traffic caused by the proposed permanent vehicle entrance opposite the school?

The Chair read out the following pre-prepared response to the question:

The planning application reference number HGY/2022/1833 submitted by Hill Residential, Catalyst Housing Limited and Catalyst by Design Limited for the St Ann's

Hospital site was considered by the Council's Planning Sub Committee on Tuesday 29 November 2022.

After considering a detailed [report](#) and hearing from objectors of the scheme including from the School, as well as supporters, the Committee resolved to grant planning permission subject to various conditions and legal obligations being agreed.

The report and discussions addressed concerns from school children about the access opposite Chestnuts Primacy School being used for construction traffic. There are two proposed site access points, and the majority of the works will use an access point to the east of the school and the developers have committed to minimising traffic opposite the school. The level of traffic using this entrance once the development is complete will be low due to the low level of parking on the site and the inclusion of measures to promote the use of sustainable transport.

The Committee's resolution referred to 'heads of terms' of legal agreements including the following to help improve air quality and safety:

- **Highway Works** - Creation of 2 new pedestrian crossings on St Ann's Road (1 signalised crossing and 1 zebra crossing)
- **Traffic Management Measures** - Provide a contribution of £80,000 towards the feasibility, design and consultation relating to the implementation of traffic management measures in the area surrounding the site
- **St Ann's Cycle Lane** - Provide a contribution of £150,000 towards a study of the feasibility and design of a protected cycle track on St Ann's Road.
- **Construction Logistics and Management** - Provide a contribution of £10,000 towards the assessment and monitoring of a detailed construction logistics and management plan (secured by condition).
- **Accident Vision Zero** - Provision of a contribution of £24,000 towards reducing traffic accidents in the vicinity of the application site and supporting 'healthy streets'
- **Residents Liaison Group** - The applicant shall use reasonable endeavours to run, facilitate and organise quarterly meetings with local residents' groups, schools and businesses during the demolition and construction works relating to the whole development.

The Committee's resolution referred to conditions which also include a Demolition Logistics Plan, Demolition Environmental Management Plan, Construction Logistics Plan and Construction Environmental Management Plan where approval from the Council will need to be sought in due course. Discharging these conditions will require evidence of engagement with the Liaison Group mentioned above

In relation to a follow-up question, Mr Davies thanked the Chair for the response and requested that the Council ensured that the health and safety of the children at Chestnuts school should be at the forefront of minds in relation to the new development.

The Panel also received a deputation on behalf of Haringey Defend Council Housing. The deputation was introduced by Paul Burnham and Jacob Secker. The key points raised as part of the deputation were noted as:

- The current cost of living crisis was not the time for raising rents on 870 new build homes. This would widen the gap between the rent paid on existing properties and new stock, to an average of £60 per week. This is something that the Council should avoid.
- The Cabinet report did not even offer a detailed financial business case for this increase.
- London Affordable Rent was a discredited rent model that was being withdrawn by the Mayor of London. Shelter had produced a report, which showed that London Affordable Rent was not affordable to lower income working families as it cost more than 30% of their income. This was made worse when considering the additional cost of service charges.
- Concerns were noted that LBH was making a strategic decision towards higher rents. The information contained in the budget report to Cabinet showed that there was a 13.8% increase in rental income next year, rising to a 52% increase over current levels by 2027. It was suggested that this was way above what was permitted by the government.
- The MTFS Cabinet report suggested that, as rent and service charges were fixed, there was no need to consult residents on the rent increase. It was commented that this was untrue and that residents should be consulted upon £98m of rent income and £12m in service charges.
- The detailed management reports which previously went to the HfH Management Board and were publicly available were no longer available on the internet. Haringey Defend Council Housing would like to see a housing management committee of the Council formed and all of the equivalent papers published as part of this committee.
- It was suggested that the Council should stand up to the government and lobby them for the investment that local people need.
- The deputation party highlighted the open letter from the Deputy Leader of Islington Council to the government calling for a rent freeze.

The following arose as part of the discussion of the deputation:

- a. The Panel sought clarification over the assertion that the London Affordable Rent (LAR) model had been discredited. In response, the deputation party advised that the Mayor's office has initially suggested that this would be no different to social rents under the model, but that this had quickly proved to be untrue and that the average gap was around £60 per week. It was suggested that the Mayor's office were moving towards all social housing being at social rents and that the average amount of development grant would be 50% higher going forwards.
- b. The Panel sought clarification around the extent to which tenants had been consulted upon the budget proposals previously. In response, the deputation party advised that tenants used to receive an annual consultation and that every tenant in the borough was written to. Any increases in rent and services charges were published as part of the December budget papers to Cabinet.

- The failure to do this seemed to be at odds with the Council's stated goal to be open and transparent.
- c. The Panel also sought clarification about the information that was no longer available on the website. In response, it was commented that HfH used to publish a huge amount of information which was no longer available. Particular attention was drawn to the backlog of fire safety actions that were no longer visible. It was suggested that no effective method had been put in place to replace this level of transparency. The deputation party would like to see a housing committee of the Council to oversee the management of what was HfH.
 - d. The Panel asked the deputation party if they had any further comments on the housing committee and its suggested role. In response, Defend Council Housing suggested that there was a degree of oversight when the ALMO was in place. The Council should have a formal committee in place with published agendas and minutes, so that tenants could play a part in how the housing function was managed and they could put forward issues to that committee. It was suggested that at present, there was a basic lack of democratic accountability for council tenants and leaseholders.
 - e. In relation to a query about whether there were any other specific authorities that had a good model for this, the Panel was advised that Swindon and Cambridge both had an effective housing committee in the past. It was essential that this housing committee was able to be critical of the Council.
 - f. Members acknowledged the need for the voice of tenants to be part of any housing committee and it was suggested that a representation of a tenant's body could perhaps be co-opted on to this panel.
 - g. The Panel sought clarification as to whether the deputation party had spoken to the Cabinet Member about London Affordable Rent being withdrawn by the Mayor. In response, Mr Burnham advised that he had not spoken to the Cabinet Member but that they would be aware of this. Mr Burnham advised that he would be happy to speak to the Cabinet Member.

In response to the deputation, Cllr Carlin, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning set out:

- a. That the governance arrangements around the housing service were in transition, following having been brought back in-house. The future governance models were being put in place and that these would require future Cabinet decisions.
- b. There was a customer call group of residents that fed into the housing service, along with a housing resident advisory panel. The Cabinet Member also set out that she was also setting up an improvement board, that would have residents on it. The Cabinet Member suggested that this board could feed into the Panel going forwards.
- c. The Cabinet Member gave assurances that, as a housing service, it was important to everyone involved that all information was freely available to residents for scrutiny and that further governance models were being put in place to support this.

The Chair thanked the deputation party and advised them that he would provide a written response, setting out what action the Panel would take in response to the deputation. **(Action: Chair).**

91. MINUTES

The Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning advised that she would bring the housing repairs improvement plan to the February meeting of the Panel as an agenda item. **(Action: Cllr Carlin/David Joyce).**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of 1st November were agreed as a correct record.

92. HOUSING REPAIRS PERFORMANCE

The Panel received a report which provided an update on repairs performance in the housing service, following its transfer from the ALMO to the Council. The Report was introduced by Cllr Carlin, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning as set out in the agenda pack at pages 9 to 16. Judith Page, Assistant Director for Property Services was also present for this agenda item. The following arose as part of the discussion on this report:

- a. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that a significant level of improvement was still needed in the housing repairs service to reach the standards that the Council and residents expected. At the point of transfer to the Council in June 2022, the service had experienced significant instability both internally and externally for the previous two and a half years. The key issue was that a lot of the housing stock was old and in need of major works.
- b. In response to a request for clarification, officers acknowledged a typographical error on page one of the report and that the chart should state that restricted repairs came to an end in June 2021, rather than repairs.
- c. In response to a query about what was meant by a limited digital offer, the Panel was advised that repairs emails went into a centralised mailbox to customers services and that these had to be allocated from there.
- d. In response to a question around KPIs and the percentage of appointments made and kept, the Cabinet Member advised that that this could be impacted by differing levels of priority. It was noted that the service was looking to publish reporting standards so that people would know how long they could expect to wait for a repair.
- e. In response to a question about the timeframe for improving repairs, the Cabinet Member advised that that this would be set out as part of the improvement plan coming to the next Panel meeting. February would fit with in with the wider project planning for this as well as the recruitment of the AD for Housing Services and an AD of Housing Management in January.
- f. Members advised that the stated 2.5% of repair jobs which resulted in a complaint, did not seem to reflect the level of complaints they were seeing in their casework. In response, the Cabinet Member commented that she would like to see this figure down to under 0.5% of complaints being escalated. Officers advised that they were bringing in a complex case team to deal with cases that had more than four repair jobs scheduled. It was envisaged that

- adopting a casework management approach would help to bring down instances of complaints being escalated. Officers advised that part of the approach being adopted was to look at the wider culture of how the Council dealt with complaints.
- g. Members commented that in terms of their own experiences, even if it was just a perception, it seemed as though things only got done once a councillor had become involved. In response, the Cabinet Member commented that ultimately the problem was around not identifying service failures quickly enough.
 - h. A Panel Member commented that they would like to see a system whereby feedback was provided to the ward councillor, so they could keep track of cases where they had escalated a complaint. Rather than the ward member only knowing that something had not been done when they were chased by the original complainant. The Cabinet Member acknowledged this point and reiterated that the key problem that needed to be resolved was identifying the initial service failing.

RESOLVED

Noted

93. SCRUTINY OF THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET / 5 YEAR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2023/24 - 2027/28)

The Panel received a covering report with a number of appendices, that set out the Council's draft budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/2028 proposals relating to the Panel's remit. The report was introduced by John O'Keefe, Head of Finance (Capital, Place & Economy) a set out in the agenda pack at pages 17 to 92. Cllr Carlin, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning was present, along with Cllr Gordon, Cabinet Member for Council House Building, Placemaking and Development. A number of officers from the Housing and Placemaking Directorate were also present.

By way of introduction, the Panel was advised that the report contained a summary of the draft budget proposals that were submitted to Cabinet the previous week. The proposals related to the revenue and capital General Fund budget as well as the HRA revenue and capital budgets, and the HRA business plan. The report noted that at present there was a £3.1m budget gap and that this was after circa £5m of additional one off funding (reserves) had been utilised. An updated report would be presented to Cabinet in February, which would reflect the updated financial position, having taken in to account the latest government funding settlement and other sources of income, such as grants. The Panel noted that the Council continued to maintain a wide ranging capital programme, however rising interest rates had affected the ability of the Council to self-finance some of these schemes.

The following arose during the discussion of this item:

- a. The Panel sought clarification about the barriers to moving on from Temporary Accommodation (TA). The Panel also enquired whether this related to people who had been in Temporary Accommodation so long that the Council could not discharge its housing duty to them by placing them in the private rented sector. In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning advised that there was around 500 families who had been in TA for a

very long time, some as long as 20 years. Many of these families were settled and had little desire to move elsewhere. The problem was that there was a cost to the Council in making up the 10% difference between the London Housing Allowance Rate and the rate for the Temporary Accommodation, and that this put additional pressure on an already very stretched budget. Saving AHC_SAV_009 related to a piece of work that was being done to work with some of these families to find permanent accommodation that they would be willing to move into. This would save the Council money as the rates for permanent Council owned accommodation were cheaper. The Cabinet Member assured Panel members that this was not about discharging families into the private sector and that for many of the families in question they would not be allowed to do so due to the fact that they had been there before the regulation change came into effect.

- b. Members asked whether, in making them a direct offer, the families in question would be jumping up the priority list. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that these families were already very high up on the allocations list, due to the length of time they had spent in Temporary Accommodation, the issue was that they were not bidding on permanent accommodation.
- c. In response to a question around what happened when offers were refused, the Cabinet Member advised that the administration needed to develop a proper policy that set out how many offers a person or family was allowed to decline. Ultimately, the Council needed to reduce the temporary accommodation bill as it ran into millions of pounds, which came out of the housing budget. The Director of Placemaking and Housing added that the situation was not helped by the government's repeated failure to offer local government a longer term grant settlement, rather than the yearly grant that it had received for several years. This made medium term financial planning very difficult.
- d. In relation to the £80k saving identified, the Panel sought clarification as to how this figure was arrived at, given it seemed quite ambitious. In response, the Cabinet Member emphasised that this was not a lot of money in the context of the circa £10m the authority spent on Temporary Accommodation each year. The Cabinet Member highlighted serious concerns with the fact the government was expected to reduce the amount of homelessness discretionary grant that the authority received and the impact this would have on the housing budget. Finance officers advised that the saving was based on a modest assumption of 180 families being relocated a year, multiplied by the average per household spend on TA.
- e. The Panel requested a written breakdown of the £10m spend on Temporary Accommodation and how many families were expected to be moved on as part of the £80k saving. **(Action: Kaycee/David Joyce).**
- f. The Panel sought assurances about how robust the financial assumptions made about P&H_SAV_001 were, and in particular, whether the £100k increase in planning fee income was achievable. In response, officers advised that Covid had seen a significant increase in applications given that a lot of people were home-based. This demand had not tailed off as yet. The projection was based on an expected national increase in fees by the government and based on current application levels.
- g. In relation to additional income from the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) and a question about proactive work in this area, officers advised that they worked proactively with fraud colleagues on this to see where additional income could

- be raised. The Planning Enforcement team had recently been active during a recent Week of Action in Wood Green. The Cabinet Member assured the Panel that she was looking to adopt a robust approach to Planning Enforcement.
- h. In relation to A&H_SAV_007, the Panel sought assurances around proposals to use more one bed social housing properties for temporary accommodation and how the Council would prevent overcrowding given the propensity for families to grow over time. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the authority was re-designing its allocations policy to allow it to map individual need and to fine tune the process of prioritising households who needed to move. It was commented that officers were look at undertaking loft extensions and extensions to the rear of properties to increase the size of the housing stock. The Cabinet Member also identified that the Council was looking at an offer to provide accommodation to adult children living with their family in Council accommodation, as well as building more family sized Council homes. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that Haringey has historically had an oversupply of one-bed properties and that there were also problems with overcrowding and associated damp problems as a result.
 - i. The Panel raised concerns about placing a family with a young child or children in a one bed property as those children would grow up and it would inevitably be overcrowded. The Cabinet Member advised that the properties being referred to were proper one bedroom units, rather than bed-sits. The Cabinet Member also set out that the Council had a legal duty to provide suitable accommodation and not place people in an overcrowded home, there was also recent case-law to back this up. The reality, it was suggested, was that the Council could not place people in overcrowded accommodation, however it was difficult due to the critical shortage of housing in the borough. The Council needed to secure as much property that it controlled as possible to ensure that people were being housed within the borough. The shortage of housing was exacerbated by a shortage of private rented sector accommodation. The Cabinet Member relayed an example of a family being place in emergency accommodation in a hotel in Ilford due to the shortage of available housing stock in the borough.
 - j. Panel Members sought clarification about the circumstances that families would be placed in hotels and whether this was only on an emergency basis and pre-assessment. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that this related to emergency accommodation. However, due to the shortage of housing stock even the in-borough emergency accommodation was full, and some people were being placed out of borough. It was noted that this was a London-wide issue. It was stated that using one bed housing stock for temporary accommodation would free up emergency accommodation the borough and that all elements of the housing portfolio were linked. In that sense it was not possible to compartmentalise pressures on emergency accommodation from other aspects of the Council's portfolio of housing.
 - k. The Panel reiterated its point about the fact that, given people were staying in Temporary Accommodation for a long time, families with young children would inevitably grow and that ideally there should be a dedicated bedroom for the child, with the obvious caveat that it depended on the age of the child. The Panel put forward a recommendation that that the suitability of accommodation used for Temporary Accommodation should be reviewed annually on family by family basis. In response the Cabinet Member advised that placing families in

Council housing stock with one bedroom, was no different to what would happen when placing people in TA into say the private sector. The Cabinet Member agreed to ask homelessness officers to feedback on whether a review of TA suitability was done annually and that if it wasn't then this should be the case. **(Action: Cllr Carlin/Jill Taylor).**

- i. The Panel also sought clarity about whether the proposal related to one child or two babies or even two children. In response, the Cabinet Member clarified that it was not limited to one child families and that it was intended for small households with small children and that it would only be offered if it was considered suitable and it did not meet the statutory definition of overcrowding. The Panel requested a written clarification on the maximum number of adults and the maximum number of children, and the ages of the children, that would be placed in a one bedroom property. **(Action: Cllr Carlin/Jill Taylor).**
- m. The Panel agreed to a recommendation around conducting an annual review on the suitability of all temporary accommodation for the families that live there. The Panel also agreed to make a recommendation to Cabinet that the suitability of placing families in one bedroom temporary accommodation should be limited to one child. **(Action: Philip).**
- n. The Panel sought clarification in relation to saving AHC_SAV_008 and a seeming discrepancy in the figures of the 103 people in TA who required one-bedroom properties, the breakdown of the figures only added up to 100. Written clarification requested from officers. **(Action: Finance/Adults).**
- o. In relation to new capital proposals the Chair noted a discrepancy in the figures for the schemes at Wards Corner, Gourlay Triangle, and Selby Urban Village in Appendix 2 compared to Appendix 5 of the pack. In response, officers advised that this was a profiling issue, as items in the capital programme were presented over a five year period and the higher figures represented anticipated spend in 2028/2029 and beyond.
- p. The Panel sought clarification about school streets and whether this would be impacted by PCN income. In response, officers advised that PCN income came into the Environment & Neighbourhoods revenue budget and was entirely separate from the School Streets capital budget.
- q. In response to a query around Wards Corner, Gourlay Triangle, and Selby Urban Village, officers advised that these schemes contained a number of different developments within the revenue budget and that any houses built on these sites would subsequently be transferred to the HRA, subject to the relevant business case for that scheme.
- r. The Panel sought clarification about some of the points raised during the deputation in relation to London Affordable Rent (LAR) being withdrawn as a model. In response, the Cabinet Member for Council House Building, Placemaking and Development advised that LAR was only available until March and so it could only be used for houses in the 2016-2023 Programme. Once it was withdrawn the Council would use formula rents or whatever future model might be brought in to replace LAR.
- s. In response to a question about why the Council was using LAR if there was a lower grant level attached to it, the Panel was advised that the homes in questions were always in the initial programme and the Council needed to get the spend for those homes out of the door or the funding would have to be returned to the GLA. It was also crucial to ensure that the GLA continued to invest in future programmes. The Cabinet Member advised that the grant

- funding for the 2016-2023 programme was £120.2m and £127.5m for the 2021-2026 round of funding. This grant funding was essential to the viability of these schemes.
- t. The Chair queried whether in order to receive this funding, the various schemes needed to start on site by March. The Cabinet Member confirmed that this was the case and there were different categorisations of what starting on site meant, including having received Planning Permission.
 - u. Officers agreed to provide a written response to whether any of the 840 homes in question had not yet received Planning Permission. **(Action: David Joyce)**.
 - v. The Panel questioned why the rent levels for a bedsit and a one bedroom flat were the same, as suggested in the report. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that the Council was not building any bedsits as part of its housebuilding programme, and this was just how the rent rates were broken down in the report. Officers advised that there may be some historical bedsit properties in the borough, but not many.
 - w. The Panel sought assurances about a proposed reduction in funding available for the bad debt for tenants provision, and how sustainable that was given the cost of living crisis. In response the Cabinet Member for Council House Building, Placemaking and Development advised that the London Affordable Rent rates were below the London Housing Allowance rates, so anyone on benefits would be fine. It was estimated that there might be a very small number of tenants who may be subject to the benefit cap and this provision could be utilised to support them. The Cabinet Member for Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning emphasised that the LAR rate was lower than the LHA rate, which itself was sitting at one third of market rates.
 - x. The Cabinet Member for Council House Building, Placemaking and Development set out that, given the interest rate spike and the increased construction costs, the Council has looked at all other means of delivering its housing programme and could, for example, increase the number of properties for private sale. The Cabinet Member advised that using London Affordable Rent was seen as the best option as it offered secure tenancies at council rents and those homes were going to people on the housing register.
 - y. The Panel sought clarification about the extent to which the administration was planning on undertaking consultation with tenants, given the Council was committed to co-production. In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning set out that the 7% rent increase would be part of the statutory consultation that was carried out as part of the wider budget. The Housing service would be looking at ways to add in additional ways to engage with residents going forwards.
 - z. The Cabinet Member for Council House Building, Placemaking and Development set out that LAR was a council rent by any meaningful definition, as it involved building homes with a secure council tenancy for those on the housing register. Most other boroughs did not differentiate between different forms of council rents. LAR was considered a council rent in planning policy terms and it was also included in the definition of a council rent within the London Plan. Both LAR and formula rents were considered to be low rent housing products.
 - aa. In response to the assertion by the deputation party that the decision to remove LAR was done on the grounds of affordability, officers commented that they did not believe this to be the case as they were both considered to be low

- cost affordable rent products in the London Plan. The LAR was being withdrawn as part of the negotiations between the GLA and government about the new iteration of its Affordable Homes Programme and the rent model calculations therein.
- bb. The Panel suggested that there need to be clarity about what the administration had taken this change of approach, given the manifesto commitment. In response, the Cabinet Member for Council House Building, Placemaking and Development advised that in an ideal scenario her political preference would have been to continue using formula rents. However, in light of the economic crisis and the increase in costs of construction, the Council had no other option. Charging London Affordable Rent was seen as the least bad option in the circumstances.
 - cc. The Chair advised that he would like to make a recommendation around the Council being clear when it talked about rent levels about exactly what it was referring to. The term formula rent should be used when formula rents were meant and similarly London Affordable Rent should be used when that was meant. The Council should also be clear that if a proposal was slightly more vague on what model should be used, then it should be clear about this. Rather than using terms like social rents or council rents seemingly interchangeably. **(Action: Philip)**
 - dd. The Chair also suggested that the gap in affordability to the cap from LAR to formula rent seemed to be slightly larger than was presented in the report. The Chair requested some more clarity and reassurance of the relative affordability of LAR against formula rent, based on the actual formula rather than their relative proximity to the cap. **(Action: David Joyce)**.
 - ee. The Chair also commented that there seemed to be an implication that everyone in social housing was in receipt of benefits. The Chair requested clarity on the number of people in Council and Temporary accommodation who were working and not in receipt of benefits. **(Action: David Joyce)**.
 - ff. The Panel sought assurances about the borrowing costs involved in the capital programme and how sustainable these were. In response, officers advised that these were higher than they would like them to be and that by February the Council would have finalised the MTFs and should have a HRA business plan that was balanced and generated enough revenue to pay off the debts in the HRA.
 - gg. In relation to heating service charges, the Cabinet Member advised that there were no plans increase energy costs through service charges in the budget. The four week consultation period was a statutory notice period used for all sorts of changes to housing management and was considered appropriate in that context.
 - hh. The Panel commented that the above comments and recommendations notwithstanding, they were generally happy with the budget proposals as set out.

RESOLVED

That the Panel considered and provided recommendations to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, on the Council's 2023/24 Draft Budget and 5 Year Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/2028 proposals relating to the Panel's remit.

94. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

RESOLVED

The work programme was noted.

95. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A

96. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

27 February 2023

CHAIR: Councillor Matt White

Signed by Chair

Date

Report for: Overview & Scrutiny Committee 30th March 2023

Report Title: **Combined Complaints, Member Enquiries, Freedom of Information Request and Ombudsman Annual Report 2021 - 2022**

Report

authorised by: Andy Briggs, Assistant Director of Corporate & Customer Services

Lead Officer: Kirsten Webb, Customer Experience Manager

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** N/A

Introduction

This report summarises Member Enquiries, complaints, Ombudsman caseload and FOI activity alongside performance **from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022**.

To provide some context to numbers set out in the report, it is estimated that we have approximately 1 million interactions with, or enquiries from, residents and businesses throughout Haringey in any given year. Below provides a breakdown of how many resident interactions were received by some of the services where our residents interact with us the most in 2021/22:

Revenues & Benefits

- 216,526 incoming documents for Council Tax in the financial year Apr 2021 to March 2022
- 212,541 Business Rates customer interactions
- 302,741 housing benefit interactions

Customer Services & Libraries

- 49,831 residents served in the face-to-face contact which is just under a 100% increase compared to 20/21 (24,899) *
- 303,948 telephone calls answered.
- 199,152 items of correspondence processed – either online or email enquiries

**The customer service centre was closed for part of the year in 20/21 due to Covid-19. Once it reopened, visits were limited so this is likely to be the cause for such a high surge in numbers*

E&N

- 35,561 'Love Clean Streets' resident interactions for Parks, Waste Enforcement and Highways
- 496 Clinical waste service requests

Adults

- 87,439 calls handled.
- 4,331 referrals
- 2,097 assessments completed.
- 1, 237 re-enablement completed

While these numbers show that as a proportion of all the interactions that residents have with the Council over a year, those which are formal complaints are very small (less than 1%), nonetheless the Council recognises that this is an area which requires improvement. This report shows some areas of strength over 2021/22 but overall, it was a challenging year. During 2022/23 we have started several improvement actions, which are detailed in the report, learning from performance and issues raised during 2021/22.

It should be noted that England was still subject Covid-19 restrictions which did impact on our ability to respond to complaints on time. In order to provide support to our communities during this period, a number of resources were redeployed across the organisation to respond to the Pandemic.

For the time period of this report, the Haringey ALMO (Homes for Haringey) was an external organisation that managed their Stage 1 complaints & Members Enquiries in house. The data has not been included in the body of this report but has been included as Appendix C for information purposes. The paper was published for the HfH Board in March 2022.

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This is the annual report and analysis of Complaints, Ombudsman Cases, Member Enquiries and Freedom of Information Requests for the period **2021/2022**.

2. Input Requested from Overview & Scrutiny

2.1 It is requested that Overview and Scrutiny note the contents of this report and we recommend that this report is used to focus the in-year complaints monitoring sessions throughout 2023/24 to assess where there is improvement work required and underway.

3. Complaints

3.1 Haringey Council welcomes feedback and complaints as valuable learning opportunities and has set challenging targets to respond to 95% of Stage 1 complaints within 10 working days and 80% of Independent Reviews (second stage complaints) within 25 working days.

3.2 The Corporate Feedback Team (CFT) administers complaints for the authority at the first stage as well as administering and investigating Independent Reviews. CFT sits under the Culture Strategy and Engagement directorate. The Housing feedback team administer complaints at stage 1 for Housing. The Housing team moved into the corporate team in December 2022 and will be fully incorporated during 2023. The next annual report will include both corporate and housing data across all stages of the feedback process.

3.3 The majority of complaints are received electronically through email or via an online form. In order to encourage channel-shift, hard copy paper forms were removed from public access points however, we can provide paper forms if the resident is unable to make a complaint through other means.

3.4

| Method | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 | 21/22 |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Email* | 60% | 58% | 58% | 40% | 39% |
| Online form* | 30% | 35% | 38% | 58% | 59% |

| | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Letter | 6% | 4% | 3% | 1% | 1% |
| Phone Call | 3% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 1% |

* All received into outlook, so requires validation due to no current automation of process.

- 3.5 The table below shows there has been an increase in the number of stage one corporate complaints which has led to a 9% decrease in the percentage responded to within target compared to last year.

| | Volume and % Replied to on time 2017/18 | Volume and % Replied to on time 2018/19 | Volume and % Replied to on time 2019/20 | Volume and % Replied to on time 2021/20 | Volume and % Replied to on time 2021/22 |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Stage 1 Complaints | 1,396 85% | 1,516 87% | 1,326 83% | 1,319 87% | 1,980 78% |
| Children's Social Care Complaints | 21 71% | 31 68% | 17 53% | 50 26% | 25 16% |
| Adults Social Care Complaints | 56 96% | 72 93% | 72 89% | 72 75% | 60 58% |

- 3.6 Children's Social Care complaint volumes decreased in 2021/22 by 50% compared to those received in 2021/20, however those responded to within target decreased by 10% compared to the year before.

Corporate Feedback Team and Children's Social Care are working together to improve the performance and will be reviewing the policy and process for Statutory CSC complaints.

Adults Social Care received fewer complaints than the year before and their performance for responding on time decreased by 17%.

Adults have appointed a designated officer to have oversight of feedback received. Corporate Feedback Team will continue to work closely with this officer to help improve performance in this area.

It is highly likely that the dip in performance can be attributed to a combination of factors including the Pandemic, availability of staff during this period and late referrals from the Feedback Team.

- 3.7 Where it is accepted that the authority is at fault in some way, the complaint is "upheld". In 2021/22, 31% of first stage complaints were upheld compared with 34% of first stage complaints in 2020/21, a 3% decrease.
- 3.8 The table below shows the upheld rate of corporate complaints across the different service areas.

| Service Area | % of all Complaints Upheld |
|---|----------------------------|
| Corporate and Customer Services | 30% |
| Environment and Neighbourhoods- Direct Services | 34% |
| Environment & Neighbourhoods – Stronger & Safer Communities | 19% |
| All other services | 17% |

- 3.9 The following table shows the five service areas that received the most complaints in 2021/22. These are also the service areas that most frequently interact directly with residents.

| Service Area | No. of Complaints | % of Total Complaints Received |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Highways & Parking | 716 | 36% |
| Contact Centre | 193 | 10% |
| Revenues | 190 | 10% |
| Waste | 162 | 8% |
| Enforcement | 95 | 5% |

- 3.10 The following table shows the top five reasons why people submit complaints. The 2021/22 data is broadly the same as the 2020/21 results. Poor standard of service remains the top reason for complaints but has decreased by 3% compared to the previous year, while Dissatisfaction with Policy or Decision has increased by 9% in the same period.

| Complaint Reason | 2020/21 % | 2021/22 % |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Poor standard of service | 34% | 31% |
| Dissatisfaction with Policy or Decision | 22% | 31% |
| Failure to Provide a Service | 22% | 18% |
| Inadequate or Inaccurate Communication | 12% | 13% |
| Employee Behaviour | 6% | 6% |

Independent Reviews (Stage 2 Complaints)

- 3.11 At the Independent Review stage (Stage 2), the Corporate Feedback Team reviews Stage 1 complaints for both the Council and Homes for Haringey. All first stage responses give the complainant details on how to escalate their complaint if they remain dissatisfied, a total of 19% took their complaints to the next stage which is an increase compared to the previous year.
- 3.12 The following table shows a large increase in Stage 2 volumes for 2021/2022 with a reduction in performance, albeit remaining above the target of 80% responded to within 25 days.
- 3.13 While we recognise that performance in this area remains good, it is troubling that the number of escalated complaints has increased. This is an indication that Stage 1

complaints were not resolved sufficiently during our initial opportunity to make things right for our residents. We intend to work more closely with services to provide training and share good practice on how best to respond to complaints, with a focus on early resolution.

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Volume | 280 | 358 | 282 | 230 | 374 |
| %responded to on-time (Target 80%) | 87% | 92% | 88% | 87% | 85% |

- 3.14 Of the 374 escalated complaints investigated, a total of 45% were upheld or partially upheld (an increase of 9%). Housing made up 55% of the total escalations to Stage 2, with 74% of the cases being upheld which is a significant increase on the previous year. In-depth work is planned between the Feedback team and Housing colleagues to learn from these complaints and understand the issues being experienced in this area.
- 3.15 The following table below breaks this information down across Service Areas.

| Service Area | No of IRs | % of Total IRs received | No. upheld / partly upheld | % of total upheld / partly upheld cases |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Housing Services and Building Safety | 205 | 55% | 125 | 74% |
| Corporate & Customer Services | 39 | 10% | 13 | 8% |
| E&N - Direct Services | 37 | 10% | 8 | 5% |
| E&N - Stronger & Safer Communities | 36 | 10% | 11 | 6% |
| Environment & Neighbourhoods | 16 | 4% | 4 | 2% |
| Children's Services - Safeguarding & Social Care | 10 | 3% | 1 | .5% |
| Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability | 7 | 2% | 0 | 0 |
| Other services | 5 or less each | 5% | 7 | |
| Total | 374 | | 169 | 4% |

Feedback Next Steps

- 3.16 A new Customer Experience Manager joined the Corporate Feedback Team in August 2022, managing the Feedback team and providing advice on complaints handling across the Council.
- 3.17 As part of the Resident Experience programme, initiated as a key action under the new Corporate Delivery Plan, adopted by Cabinet in January 2023, we are undertaking a review of the Corporate Feedback service offer which will include, improving processes, introducing learning from feedback and updating systems.
- 3.18 One of the activities currently in progress is upgrading the Respond case management system from on-premises to a cloud-based system, which will bring enhanced capabilities while reducing costs to the council. Along with this upgrade, we are testing

e-forms which will automatically log cases into the system which in turn will create further capacity in the team for initiating the quality assurance measures that we are keen to implement to address some of the issues highlighted in this report.

- 3.19 As part of the review, the Corporate Feedback Team will become more involved in managing rather than simply administering complaints and promoting learning from the feedback received. It will also introduce improved reporting to make learning more available and digestible for services, so they are better able to address areas of concern.
- 3.20 Regular meetings are held with key service areas (high demand/statutory) however these will be extended to the remaining services as part of the improvement plan for Feedback. There will be clear and agreed escalation routes where the Corporate Feedback team consider that draft responses do not sufficiently address the issues raised by complainants with a view to improving the quality of complaints responses.
- 3.21 The Corporate Feedback Review is intended to 're-set' the corporate culture relating to feedback, to be more positive and collaborative with our residents when resolving issues that have been raised. The relevant actions from the Corporate Delivery Plan are extracted below for information and ease of reference:

4. Compliments

- 4.1 We record compliments from residents whether it be by email, letter, online, by phone or directly via a manager.

Work will be undertaken to transform our approach to complaints, so that there is a clear shift from processing complaints to managing complaints:

Outputs from this work will include:

- Clear method of pre-complaint opportunities to resolve
- Intervention in Stage 1 - no more marking of own homework
- Clear Quality Assurance framework for all services to meet the 'Residents First' internal kitemark
- Clear links to training and development and sharing learning through an internal Complaints Forum to improve services
- Change in KPIs and monitoring framework to focus on successes not on processing times

We received 114 compliments between 1 April 2021 and March 2022 and the table below provides a breakdown of the service areas that were complimented. There has been a slight decline in the number of compliments received compared to 2019/2020 (previously 149 council wide). However, there are some initiatives underway to enhance the compliments process which may increase the number of compliments received across the Authority.

| Service Area | No. of Compliments |
|--|--------------------|
| Corporate and Customer Services | 61 |
| Children's Services Early Help and Prevention | 11 |
| Adult Social Services | 11 |
| E&N Direct Services | 10 |
| Children's Services Safeguarding and Social Care | 8 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Commissioning | 4 |
| Planning, Building Standards and Sustainability | 4 |
| E&N Stronger & Safer Communities | 3 |
| Legal & Governance | 1 |
| Children's Services Schools and Learning | 1 |
| Total | 114 |

5. Member Enquiries

- 5.1 The target is to respond to 95% of Member Enquiries within 10 working days. In 2021/2022 a total of 2,535 Member Enquiries were received: comprising of 77% enquiries from Haringey Councillors and 23% from Members of Parliament. This is the same ratio of enquiries as in the previous year.
- 5.2 The response rate in 2021/22 was 83%, which was below our target and a decrease of 4% compared to the previous year.
- 5.3 The following table shows the comparative performance data across the last five years

| Year | Number | % Replied to on-time |
|---------|--------|----------------------|
| 2021/22 | 2,535 | 83% |
| 2020/21 | 2,532 | 87% |
| 2019/20 | 2,460 | 88% |
| 2018/19 | 2,778 | 92% |
| 2017/18 | 2,249 | 89% |

- 5.4 The table below shows the breakdown of Member Enquiries received across service areas for 2021/22.

| Service Area | No. of MEs | 2021/22 | % of Total MEs |
|--|------------|---------|----------------|
| E&N - Direct Services | 915 | | 36% |
| E&N - Stronger & Safer Communities | 504 | | 20% |
| Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability | 287 | | 11% |
| Corporate & Customer services | 280 | | 11% |
| Adult Social Services | 123 | | 5% |
| Commissioning | 69 | | 3% |
| Capital Projects and Property | 52 | | 2% |
| Housing | 47 | | 2% |
| Children's Services – Early Help and Prevention | 44 | | 2% |
| Children's Services – Safeguarding and Social Care | 38 | | 1% |

| | | |
|---|----|-----|
| Environment & Neighbourhoods | 38 | 1% |
| Children's Services – School's and Learning | 35 | 1% |
| Regeneration and Economic Development | 27 | 1% |
| Finance | 23 | 1% |
| Public Health | 16 | 1% |
| Legal & Governance | 15 | 1% |
| HR & OD | 8 | <1% |
| Strategy, Communication and Delivery | 7 | <1% |
| Digital Services | 4 | <1% |
| E&N – Procurement | 3 | <1% |

5.5 The following tables break this information down further for the top 3 service areas (five most complained about issues).

| E&N Stronger & Safer Communities | |
|---|-----|
| Anti-Social Behaviour | 234 |
| Missed collections | 61 |
| Noise | 43 |
| Housing Disrepair / Environmental Health | 34 |
| Street Cleansing | 28 |

| E & N Direct Services | |
|--|-----|
| Concessionary Travel & Parking Permits | 107 |
| Trees | 89 |
| PCN Challenges | 78 |
| Traffic calming | 62 |
| Parks Management | 56 |

| Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability | |
|--|----|
| Planning enforcement | 87 |
| Development Management | 74 |
| Transport Planning | 52 |
| Active Travel | 19 |
| Planning Policy | 15 |

5.6 Below gives a breakdown of issues raised in the enquiries.

| Nature of Enquiry | |
|---|-----|
| Information Request | 71% |
| Service Request | 16% |
| Covid-19 Information | 15% |
| Dissatisfaction with Policy and Procedure | 4% |
| Poor Standard of Service | 7% |
| Failure to Provide a Service | 3% |
| Inadequate or Inaccurate Communications | 2% |
| Employee Behaviour | <1% |

5.7 A total of 71% of Member Enquiries were requests for information which is an increase of 12% from the previous year, and 16% were Service Requests. Notably, Covid-19 Information requested doubled in 2021/22 compared to the 2020/21 figure (7%) when the pandemic first began in the UK.

Member Enquiries Next Steps

5.8 As part of the Feedback Review project, we will continue to work with the Councillors and MPs to improve the Member Enquiries process to allow us to issue a timely response and resolve residents' concerns. Recognising that the vast majority of Member Enquiries are simple information requests, we will investigate further if there are speedier and simpler ways of providing the kind of information requested by Members, for example signposting to information more clearly on the website. There is an opportunity to use the information held by the Feedback team to inform the development of the new website to reduce the number of contacts instigated by Members and indeed members of the public.

5.9 One of the outputs of the Feedback Review will also be to deliver a case management system to councillors so they can better manage and track the more complex cases brought to them by constituents.

Freedom of Information (FOI)

5.10 The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act was introduced in 2005 with its purpose being to make authorities and public bodies more open and transparent with the information they hold.

5.11 The FOI Act and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) are very similar and are dealt with through the same process. The figures given below are for both FOI and EIR requests.

5.12 Public Authorities must respond to FOI / EIR requests within 20 working days from the date the request was received.

5.13 All requests must be received in writing and Haringey has a dedicated online form and email address for this.

5.14 In line with best practice, Haringey proactively publishes data and information relating to FOI/EIR requests online and we have a disclosure log, which shows all requests received and responses issued. In addition, a full performance report is published online.

5.15 Between April 2021 and March 2022, Haringey received a total of 1335 requests, which is a 22% increase on the previous year. 83% of responses were sent within 20 days, a 1% increase compared to the year before but does not meet the requirement for all request to be responded to on time.

5.16 The following table shows the volume and performance for the past 5 years.

| Year | No. of requests | % on time |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| 2021-2022 | 1335 | 83% |
| 2020-2021 | 1094 | 82% |
| 2019-2020 | 1384 | 86% |
| 2018-2019 | 1434 | 82% |
| 2017-2018 | 1352 | 83% |

5.17 There were requests where information was not provided to the requestor either because it was not held or there was a cost attached to responding to the request as shown in the table below. Note: requests where information was not held/costly are included in the overall number of 1335 requests received.

| Information not provided | Total | % of Total requests |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Information not held | 147 | 11% |
| Information not given due to cost | 26 | 2% |

5.18 Of the of 1335 requests received, we applied exemptions to 128 (11%). Both the FOI and EIR Acts contain exemptions that allow Public Authorities to withhold information in certain cases. Note: exemptions are included in the overall number of 1335 requests received.

| FOI - Exemption Applied | Total | % of Total Exemptions |
|--|-------|-----------------------|
| Section 40 – Personal Information | 52 | 40% |
| Section 31 – Law Enforcement | 28 | 22% |
| Section 43 – Commercial Interests | 13 | 10% |
| Section 21 - Info accessible by some other means | 12 | 9% |
| Section 36 - Effective Conduct of Public Affairs | 5 | 4% |
| Section 22 - Intended for future publication | 3 | 2% |
| Section 24 – Safeguarding of National Security | 3 | 2% |
| Section 41 – Confidential Information | 1 | 1% |
| Section 38 - safety of any individual | 1 | 1% |
| EIR - Exemption Applied | Total | % of Total Exemptions |
| Regulation 12 5 (f) | 5 | 4% |
| Regulation 12 (4) b) – Manifestly Unreasonable | 3 | 2% |
| Regulation 12 (4) (a) – Information not held | 2 | 2% |
| Regulation 12 (4) (d) – Material in the course of completion | 1 | 1% |

- 5.19 The highest number of requests were received by Environment and Neighbourhoods – Direct Services, who dealt with 262 cases (20% of all received requests)

| Service | No of Requests | % of Total Requests |
|--|----------------|---------------------|
| E&N – Direct Services | 262 | 20 |
| E&N – Stronger & Safer Communities | 239 | 18 |
| Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability | 135 | 10 |
| Corporate & Customer Services | 127 | 10 |
| Commissioning | 107 | 8 |
| Children's Services - Safeguarding & Social Care | 67 | 5 |
| Children's Services - Schools & Learning | 56 | 4 |
| Finance | 49 | 4 |
| Human Resources & Organisational Development | 39 | 3 |
| Capital Projects and Property | 34 | 3 |
| Children's Services - Early Help & Prevention | 34 | 3 |
| Public Health | 32 | 2 |
| Digital Services | 30 | 2 |
| Legal and Governance | 27 | 2 |
| Strategy, Communications and Delivery | 25 | 2 |
| Housing | 20 | 1 |
| Environment & Neighbourhoods | 19 | 1 |
| Adult Social Services | 13 | <1 |
| E&N – Procurement | 11 | <1 |
| Regeneration and Economic Development | 9 | <1 |

6. Internal Reviews

- 6.1 If a resident is unhappy with the way their FOI/EIR request was handled, they can ask for an Internal Review, which are conducted by the Corporate Feedback Team.
- 6.2 A total of 63 internal reviews were conducted (5% of the requests received). This was an increase of 142% compared to the number of reviews conducted in the previous year. 83% of the internal reviews were responded to on time. Almost half of the reviews were upheld, again indicating that the requests had not been correctly responded to at the initial request. It is clear from this data that as an organisation we need to improve our responses to FOI's and quite possibly other Data Protection related processes such as Subject Access Requests. We will explore additional training for service areas and the Corporate Feedback Team to ensure we fully understand the Freedom of Information process and our obligations to be transparent with the data we hold.

| Decision | Total | % of Total Reviews |
|---------------|-------|--------------------|
| Not upheld | 31 | 49 |
| Partly upheld | 12 | 19 |
| Upheld | 20 | 32 |

- 6.3 If, following an internal review, a customer remains dissatisfied with the response they can approach the office of the Information Commissioner (ICO) to ask them to review the decision.
- 6.4 During 2021/2022 we received two formal decisions, neither required us to undertake any actions. This is a 50% decrease from the number of formal decisions the ICO made in respect of Haringey compared to 2019/20.

7. Local Government Ombudsman Performance and Findings

- 7.1 Every year the Local Government Ombudsman writes to all Local Authorities with details of the complaints that their office has received including information about the number of complaints and enquiries received, the decisions made, and compliance with recommendations during the period.
- 7.2 There is further information on the Ombudsman's website, which provides a comparison with other Local Authorities. Some key national statistics are shown in **appendix A**.
- 7.3 The table below shows Haringey's performance in 2021/22 against our neighbouring boroughs. In all instances there was an increase in the number of cases referred to the Ombudsman compared to the previous year.

| Authority Name | Invalid or Incomplete | Advice Given | Referred Back for Local Resolution | Closed after Initial Enquiries | Not Upheld | Upheld | Total | Uphold rate (%) | Average uphold rate (%) of similar authorities |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|-----------------|--|
| London Borough of Barnet | 11 | 11 | 48 | 58 | 9 | 21 | 158 | 70% | 71% |
| London Borough of Camden | 4 | 17 | 27 | 31 | 8 | 17 | 104 | 68% | 71% |
| London Borough of Enfield | 4 | 7 | 56 | 40 | 10 | 27 | 144 | 73% | 71% |
| London Borough of Hackney | 6 | 20 | 36 | 41 | 6 | 22 | 131 | 79% | 71% |
| London Borough of Haringey | 5 | 14 | 35 | 51 | 15 | 29 | 149 | 66% | 71% |
| London Borough of Islington | 4 | 12 | 39 | 26 | 4 | 11 | 96 | 73% | 71% |

- 7.4 Haringey had 149 cases referred to the Ombudsman in 2021/22 compared to 164 in 2020/21. The Ombudsman investigated 44 of these and upheld 29, showing an upheld percentage of 66%. This compares to an average of 71% in similar councils.
- 7.5 The reduced percentage of upheld cases is positive as this indicates we are resolving cases to a more satisfactory level at Stage 2 of the process than in previous years.
- 7.6 The Local Government Ombudsman issued two Public Interest Reports against Haringey Council in 2021/22 which is one more than the year before.

The first involved Haringey's handling of a disabled facilities grant-funded adaptation for a disabled child. The investigation found that *"Haringey took too long to carry out the works, changed the specification without agreement, did not offer suitable interim provision and did not properly consult with the child's parents about what they needed for their growing son, as so much time had passed since the initial assessment. The failure to provide adaptations caused significant distress and inconvenience to the whole family.*

To remedy this injustice, we recommended the Council should apologise, make a payment to the complainants, and liaise with them to complete the adaptation. We also asked the Council to review its procedures to prevent similar failures. The Council

agreed and I am pleased with the extensive work carried out to improve its disabled facilities grant procedures and resources.”

The second Public Interest Report detailed the Haringey’s handling of the possible purchase of a complainant’s home related to the development of a neighbouring site. The investigation found *“that the Council failed to undertake proper scrutiny and analysis when deciding not to include the terrace of houses in the scheme. We also found the Council had not been even-handed in its dealings with the complainant and had failed to keep in touch. We also considered the Council had not presented accurate information to its scrutiny committee.*

To remedy the injustice, we recommended the Council should apologise and pay the complainant £1,000. We also asked the Council to reconsider the proposals. In the report, we referred to the Council’s failure to provide information on negotiations and contact with the neighbouring property owner. We did not pursue this further because we were able to make a decision on the complaint, but it was unsatisfactory that the Council was unable, or unwilling, to provide this information. The lack of transparency added to our concerns about the case.

I am, however, satisfied with the action the Council has taken in its reconsideration of the matter.”

- 7.7 The Local Government Ombudsman was able to confirm satisfaction with our compliance with their recommendations in 96% of cases during the year, which is a 1% increase compared to the year before.

Ombudsman Statistics

- 7.8 The following table shows the number of enquiries the ombudsman received in 2021/22 and the outcome. Categories of “advice given”, “incomplete/invalid”, and “referred back for local resolution” are all cases that did not involve the Ombudsman investigating the complaint. This equated to 54 cases and 36% of the total received.

| Outcomes 2021/22 | Number |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Advice given | 14 |
| Incomplete / invalid | 5 |
| Not Upheld | 15 |
| Upheld | 29 |
| Referred to local resolution | 35 |
| Closed after initial enquiry | 51 |
| Total | 149 |

- 7.9 Cases that are closed after initial enquiries do involve some investigation and input from the Council.
- 7.10 The upheld and not upheld cases are enquiries that proceeded to a full investigation. Of the cases we dealt with, 29 were upheld representing 19% across all enquiries regarding Haringey received by the Ombudsman. For a breakdown of these cases, please see Appendix B.

8. Housing Ombudsman Performance and Findings

- 8.1 Where Homes for Haringey (HfH) were unable to resolve a complaint at Stage 1, they would inform the complainant of their right to refer their complaint to Stage 2 and finally the Housing Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied. Of the 1949 Stage 1 decisions issued by HfH, 60% had at least one element of the complaint upheld.
- 8.2 The rate of conversion from Stage 1 to Stage 2 was 12% with a further 33% escalated from Stage 2 to the Housing Ombudsman.
- 8.3 The Housing Ombudsman issued 42 decisions against HfH. The following table provides a breakdown of the number of decisions issued and the outcome of these cases.

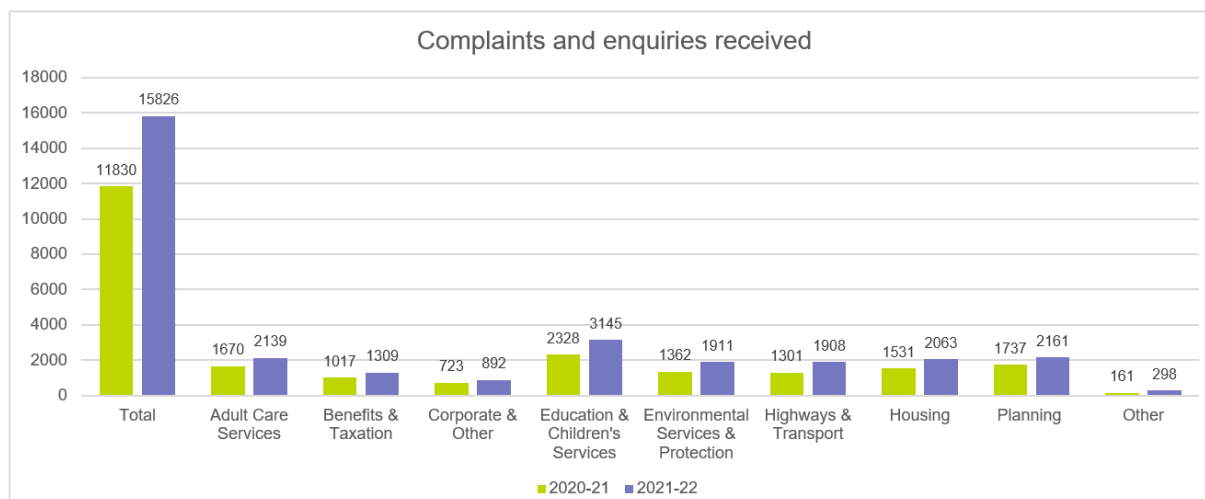
| Determination | 2021/22 | | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|---|-------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | No of cases | % of total | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Closed after initial enqs - no further action | 4 | 10% | | | 1 | | | | | 2 | | | 1 | |
| Closed after initial enqs - out of jurisdiction | 9 | 21% | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 3 | | 1 | | 3 |
| Maladministration | 11 | 26% | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| No Maladministration | 2 | 5% | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | |
| Not upheld - No Maladministration | 4 | 10% | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | |
| Outside Jurisdiction | 3 | 7% | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 |
| Partial Maladministration | 2 | 5% | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Redress | 1 | 2% | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Severe Maladministration | 1 | 2% | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| Upheld - Maladministration & Injustice | 2 | 5% | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Upheld - Maladministration, No Injustice | 2 | 5% | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| Upheld - No further action | 1 | 2% | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Total Upheld | 42 | 100% | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 8 |

- 8.4 HfH paid a total of £51,968.71 in compensation relating to complaints.

Appendix A – summary of Local Government Ombudsman cases (all boroughs)

There is further information on the Ombudsman’s website, however some key statistics for all cases received by the Ombudsman are shown below for reference.

The Ombudsman registered a total of 15,826 complaints and enquiries in 2021/22 compared to 11,830 in 2020/21



They carried out 4048 detailed investigations in 2021/22 compared to 3144 in 2020/21. The below graph explains the breakdown of the received service areas and percentage upheld for all councils.

| Service Name | Volume of detailed cases | Percentage upheld |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Education & Children’s Services | 1,069 | 77% |
| Adult Care Services | 990 | 69% |
| Housing | 397 | 71% |
| Environment & Public Protection | 380 | 68% |
| Benefits and Tax | 327 | 59% |
| Highways & Transport | 212 | 55% |
| Planning & Development | 565 | 45% |
| Corporate & Other | 108 | 62% |
| Total | 4048 | |

Of those detailed investigations they upheld 66%, a decrease from 67% in 2020/22

The Ombudsman made a total of 1848 recommendations to put things right on upheld cases for 2021/22

Appendix B – summary of findings

| Adult's Social Services | |
|---|--|
| Summary of complaint | Remedy |
| The majority of this complaint was relating to the NHS Trust, but there was an element regarding care package and social care needs which related to the Council. | We apologised for failing to respond the complainant's offer to provide support and pay towards the care package if it would enable her to return home. |
| Mr B has a disability and had difficulty in using his adapted bathroom which meant it was difficult for him to transfer from the toilet to the shower. He complained about the Council's process of assessing his needs for the bathroom and says the Council delayed addressing the problem. | We apologised and paid compensation. |
| Dispute over our decision that the complainant was not eligible for care and support from August 2019. We were found to be at fault. | We apologised and made a payment to acknowledge the distress caused to her by the delay in assessing her as eligible for care and support which meant she did not have a care package for approximately 18 months longer than necessary. We also to reimburse the cost of the care she had to purchase. We also reminded officers that they should consider the impact of a person's mental health on their ability to meet outcomes and their wellbeing when carrying out a care act assessment and determining their eligibility for care and support. |
| Miss X, complains the Council delayed putting adequate care in place for her late mother, Ms Y, after an assessment in February 2020. Also that we carried out carers assessments without getting her opinion. | We paid compensation to recognise the fault |
| Ms C complained about the way in which we dealt with her sister's financial assessment for her temporary care home placement. Ms C says this resulted in distress to her. | We apologised and paid compensation |
| Joint complaint with the CCG - The complainant, Mr B, complained about the actions of London Borough of Haringey (the Council) and NHS North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (the CCG). Mr B complained the free home care package his mother, Miss M, received following discharge from hospital in May 2020 was stopped incorrectly. Mr B said that: This was contrary to the Government's COVID-19 hospital discharge guidance and to a letter Miss M received from the CCG; and the care package was stopped suddenly and without enough notice. | We, alongside the CCG wrote to the complainant to acknowledge the faults identified and to apologise for their impact. We also undertook to ensure our reablement service is aware of the importance of keeping adequate records, including of planning conversations with service users and key reasons for its decisions. |

| Revenues and Benefits | |
|--|--|
| Summary of complaint | Remedy |
| The complaint was that we wrongly stopped taking council tax payments in 2021 causing arrears. The complaint was not investigated by the Ombudsman | The Ombudsman found we had resolved the complaint appropriately by explaining what went wrong, apologising for our error, and offering to spread the arrears over this financial year. |
| Ms B complained about the Council miscalculating her and her brother's council tax for the period when she was a full-time student. She said this confused them and led them to believe she overpaid her council tax. The Ombudsman found us to be at fault for raising Ms B's and Mr X's expectations about a possible council tax refund | We made a payment in recognition of the injustice caused by the raised expectations and update council tax records |

| Education and Children's Services | |
|---|---|
| Summary of complaint | Remedy |
| <p>Ms X complained that we wrongly treated her granddaughter's placement with her as a private arrangement and failed to provide any practical or financial support between May and October 2017. Ms X also complained the Council failed to establish her granddaughter's status and delayed in applying for a passport and citizenship.</p> <p>The failings in the way the Council dealt with Z's placement with Ms X and in the level of support it provided amount to fault. As does the delay in applying for or supporting Ms X in applying for Z's passport. These faults have caused Ms X and Z an injustice.</p> | <p>We agreed to pay Ms X backdated kinship allowance for the period 20 May to 30 May 2017.</p> <p>We also apologised to the child and made a payment to her in recognition of the distress and uncertainty the delay in applying for or supporting Ms X to apply for her passport has caused.</p> |
| Mr X complained about delay by the Council when arranging replacement cot sides for his disabled son's bed and related matters. | We apologised and paid compensation. We had already taken action to improve the ordering process to prevent a similar situation happening again. |
| Mr X complained about the Council's failure to meet his disabled son's needs by taking too long to carry out adaptations to his property. He also complained about being pressurised into accepting unsuitable adaptations. | We apologised, paid compensation and agreed work to be completed. |
| Mr X complained about how the Council responded to two child safeguarding reports about his children in 2020. There was no fault in how the Council investigated Mr X's safeguarding reports, but there was fault in how the Council caused Mr X to miss part of a child in need meeting. | We apologised, reviewed procedures and issued reminders to relevant staff. |
| Mrs M complained about her son B's education. The Council did not complete annual reviews of B's EHC Plan between March 2017, when the Plan was first issued, and March 2021. | We apologised for the complaints that were upheld and arranged some tuition for B. |

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|---|-------------------------|
| <p>Ms X complained about the Council's handling of her daughter, Y's special educational needs and delay in carrying out an annual review of her Education, Health and Care Plan and post -16 placement transfer review. The Ombudsman found fault as we had delayed in carrying out the post -16 placement transfer review, but this did not cause significant injustice to warrant a personal remedy.</p> | <p>No remedy needed</p> |
|---|-------------------------|

| Highways | |
|---|---|
| Summary of complaint | Remedy |
| <p>Complaint was that the Council issued her with a penalty charge notice for parking in a residents' parking bay without displaying a valid permit and failed to cancel it when she explained she had been issued with a virtual permit rather than a physical one. The Ombudsman found the Council was at fault in failing to cancel the penalty charge notice when Ms B made informal representations.</p> | <p>We apologised, made a payment and reviewed procedures.</p> |
| <p>Complaint was that we repeatedly failed to collect a resident's household waste, including a three-month period from December 2020 when we failed to make any collections at all.</p> | <p>No remedy as the Ombudsman did not consider that our failure to collect the waste caused the resident injustice</p> |
| <p>Ms Y complained that we failed to pay an agreed refund for a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) which was sent to an incorrect address. Ms Y says we said we had sent a cheque to her several times, but she had not received this. This has caused her inconvenience.</p> | <p>The Ombudsman did not investigate as we had already agreed an alternative way of providing the refund.</p> |
| <p>Mr X complained we and our contractor failed to consistently collect his rubbish, missing some collections and collecting others late.</p> <p>Mr X says he had overflowing bins, irritation with the service problems, and annoyance with the complaint process upholding his complaint but not remedying it to his satisfaction.</p> | <p>The Ombudsman did not investigate Mr X's complaint because:</p> <p>There was not enough evidence of the matters causing Mr X such a significant personal injustice to warrant them investigating, and an investigation would not lead to a different outcome to the Council apology it has already provided.</p> |

| Housing | |
|--|--|
| Summary of complaint | Remedy |
| <p>Complaint was about how we dealt with Miss X when she was homeless.</p> | <p>Ombudsman did not investigate as she had not been caused a significant injustice in relation to our action in providing her with temporary accommodation. We had also acknowledged delays in responding to her complaint and provided a financial remedy so there was nothing further to be achieved from an investigation.</p> |

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| <p>Complaint was that we were at fault in the way we considered a housing register application and refused the application to join the housing register. The Ombudsman found fault as we had not clearly explained appeal rights against our decision and wrongly listed the applicant as living in a three bedroomed property</p> | <p>The Ombudsman recommended a service improvement about our decision letters. But the fault did not cause the complainant an injustice, so they completed the investigation with no further remedy needed.</p> |
| <p>Complaint was that we failed to: provide suitable temporary accommodation when we decided the complainant was homeless in October 2019; and move her and her young children out of their property, which suffered from damp and mould, before July 2021. As a result, she and her young children slept together in one bed in a single room whose walls were damp and mouldy.</p> | <p>We apologised for failing to: carry out, or arrange, an inspection of her accommodation before she moved in; show evidence of the checks it says officers would have done before she moved in; find her alternative suitable temporary accommodation when aware of her overcrowding; show it acted in January 2020 on her reports of damp and mould for 8 months;</p> <p>Paid compensation</p> <p>Undertook to ensure inspections by, or on behalf of, the Council are carried out along with necessary checks of accommodation; to ensure requests for repairs are referred promptly to landlords/management agents and followed up to ensure they are done; and ensure applicants in unsuitable accommodation are found suitable accommodation promptly.</p> |
| <p>A private tenant had an issue with a disrepair problem regarding her boiler for over a year and the complaint was that we did not adequately support her and didn't deal with her complaint properly.</p> | <p>We made a payment in respect of avoidable distress caused to her.</p> <p>We undertook to review how we handle communications from members of the public and how they are then entered on CRM systems in order to ensure they are properly assessed and actioned.</p> |
| <p>Miss X complained we failed to provide her with timely and suitable support after her landlord illegally evicted her. There was no fault in how we helped Miss X with her complaint of illegal eviction. There was fault with how we encouraged Miss X to withdraw her application when considering her homelessness, however this did not cause Miss X a significant injustice.</p> | <p>We issued reminders to housing officers to prevent similar fault in future.</p> |
| <p>The complaint was that we should have awarded band A priority under our housing allocations scheme to a couple. The Ombudsman found there was no evidence of fault in how we reached the decision to place the couple in band B. However, we failed to</p> | <p>We apologised</p> |

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| respond to their complaint which was fault and this caused frustration to them. | |
| <p>Mr P complained about the level of housing priority we had allocated him. Specifically, Mr P says he had been allocated standard priority since 2011, though given the number of children he had in residence, he felt he should be given higher priority for housing.</p> <p>Mr P also said we had wrongly said his priority band for housing has an effective date (the date of his eligibility). of May 2019. He says he should have an effective date of August 2011.</p> <p>Mr P also complained that his current property was overcrowded as five people are sharing a one-bedroom property. Mr P wants to move to a bigger home and for the Council to rectify the priority effective date.</p> | <p>We apologised to Mr P for the faults identified and made a payment on account of the uncertainty he has suffered, as well as time and trouble in pursuing his complaint.</p> <p>We agreed to undertake a full review of Mr P's needs for housing, including the priority banding and effective date, and then provide a written decision.</p> |

| Other | |
|--|---|
| Summary of complaint | Remedy |
| Mr X complained we incorrectly applied a retail discount to his company's business rates account. The Ombudsman found that we incorrectly applied the discount on the account, then billed Mr X's company without proper communication and then withdrew an offer to cancel some of the debt after Mr X had made a substantial payment. | We made a payment to acknowledge the distress and frustration this caused him. |
| Mr X complained about our handling of the possible purchase of his home related to the development of a neighbouring site. The Ombudsman upheld the complaint and found fault causing injustice. | <p>We apologised to Mr X for the faults found and the injustice caused to him and made a payment.</p> <p>We also undertook to review the decision, and consider all the possible options for the site including the inclusion of the terrace of houses in the scheme.</p> |
| Complaint was that we wrongly refused a full Covid related discretionary grant payment, causing financial loss. | We gave an apology, a payment for time and trouble and a payment for injustice caused by the missed discretionary grant payment, of the value of the grant payment. . |
| Mr K complained that we decided to introduce a borough-wide ban on exercising dogs without a lead, as part of social distancing measures during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr K said this is disproportionate. The Ombudsman found that we were entitled to decide dogs should be kept on leads in all areas, as part of its social distancing measures during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, our explanations of our dog control powers were confusing and contradictory, which was found to be fault. This did not cause a substantive injustice to | We agreed to circulate a reminder to staff in the relevant teams, explaining clearly what current dog control powers we have, which orders they arise from, and the change made to introduce the expanded 'leads by direction' rule. |

| | |
|---|--|
| the complainant, but we agreed to ensure officers properly understand the orders on which its powers are based. | |
|---|--|

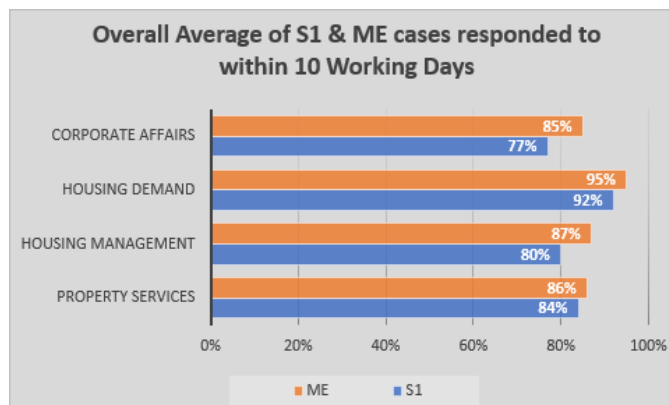
Appendix C – Housing data / Housing Board March 2022

Below is a link to the Performance report that was presented at the Homes for Haringey Board in March 2022, and contains some information relating to complaint performance.

[12 Board Performance Report March 2022.pdf](#)

We have also shared some data below that has been pulled from the complaints case management system to provide more granular detail regarding the volume and service area of Stage 1 complaints and Members Enquiries.

| <u>Overall Average of S1 & ME cases responded to within 10 Working Days</u> | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Service Area | S1 | ME |
| Property Services | 84% | 86% |
| Housing Management | 80% | 87% |
| Housing Demand | 92% | 95% |
| Corporate Affairs | 77% | 85% |



| <u>Total Number of Stage 1 Complaints Received</u> | | |
|---|---------------------|------------------|
| Service Area | Total Number | Overall % |
| Property Services | 1082 | 56% |
| Housing Management | 524 | 27% |
| Housing Demand | 281 | 14% |
| Corporate Affairs | 60 | 3% |

Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 30 March 2023

Title: **Change to Scrutiny Membership 2022/23**

Authorised by: Fiona Alderman, Head of Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer

Lead Officer: Ayshe Simsek Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
0208 489 2929 ayshe.simsek@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Non-Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration.

To agree changes to the membership of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel and Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel as a result of the Council Member changes and change of political composition.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To agree that Cllr Ali to replace Cllr Wallace on the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel
- 3.2 To agree that Cllr Mason will fill the Labour vacant position on the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel.

4. Background information

- 4.1 On the 6th of January 2023 it was confirmed by Cllr Joy Wallace, to the Monitoring Officer , Democratic Services Manager and Chief Executive in writing that she no longer wished to be treated as a member of the Labour group; This was in accordance with Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 – 10b.
- 4.2 On the 19th of January 2023, Cllr Yannis Gourtsoyannis confirmed in writing his resignation as an elected member of the Council and subsequently on March the 9 2023 , Cllr Sean Donovan was elected as a Councillor for Tottenham Hale Ward and is a Labour Councillor.
- 4.3 The political balance of the Council of 57 councillors is now as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Labour | 49 councillors (85.95%) |
| Liberal Democrats | 7 councillors (12.3%) |

Independent 1 Councillor (1.75%)

- 4.4 The Council is required to ensure that appointments to which the statutory political balance rules apply are made in accordance with those rules. The relevant rules are summarised below (see paragraph 4.5).The Annual Meeting of the Council appoints Committees of the Council in accordance with Article 4.02(k) of the Constitution. The Council is required to comply with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 in terms of political balance when appointing 'ordinary' committees – that is, committees appointed under section 102(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 4.5 These rules provide that seats on 'ordinary' committees must be allocated in line with the following principles, so far as reasonably practicable:
- (a) that not all the seats on a body are allocated to the same political group;
 - (b) that the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to the political group which has the majority of the Council's membership;
 - (c) that, subject to principles (a) and (b) above, the proportion of seats allocated to each political group out of the total number of seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council shall be in the same proportion as their share of membership of the Council as a whole; and
 - (d) that, subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, the number of seats on each individual body shall be allocated to each political group in the same proportion as their share of membership of the Council as a whole.
- 4.6 In calculating the allocation of seats on ordinary committees, the following bodies are excluded because these bodies are excluded from the statutory rules on political balance:
- The Cabinet.
 - The disciplinary pool.
 - Licensing Sub-Committees (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Committee).
 - The Health and Wellbeing Board.
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 4.7 Principles (a), (b) and (d) of the rules apply to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by virtue of section 9FA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 2000. However, because the Committee is established under the Local Government Act 2000, it is not an ordinary committee appointed under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and so it is not included in the political balance calculations for the total number of seats on ordinary committees (principle c). As such, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must be balanced, but on an individual basis.

- 4.8 Article 6 of the Constitution states the OSC shall appoint Scrutiny Panels in order to discharge the Overview and Scrutiny role.
- 4.9 The specific functions for any Scrutiny Panels established are outlined in Article 6 of the Constitution at 6.3 (b) and 6.3 (c). The procedure by which this operates is detailed in the Scrutiny Protocol:
- The OSC shall establish four standing Scrutiny Panels, to examine designated public services.
 - The OSC shall determine the terms of reference for each Scrutiny Panel.
 - If there is any overlap between the business of the Panels, it is the responsibility of the OSC to resolve the issue.
 - Areas which are not covered by the four standing Scrutiny Panels shall be the responsibility of the main OSC.
 - The Chair of each Scrutiny Panel shall be a member of the OSC, as determined by the OSC at its first meeting.
 - Scrutiny Panels are comprised of between 3 and 7 backbench or opposition members, and be politically proportionate as far as possible.
 - Each Scrutiny Panel shall be entitled to appoint up to three non-voting co-optees. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel membership will include the statutory education representatives of OSC
- 4.10 There are currently 7 seats available on each of the 4 scrutiny panels with 6 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat and changes to the political composition and the councillor vacancy do not significantly impact on proportionality. By keeping to 6 seats for Labour and 1 seat for the Liberal Democrat group on each panel, principles (a), (b) and (d) of Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 are adhered to.
- 4.11 The Majority group and Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have indicated that they wish to make the following changes to the membership of the scrutiny panels:
- Cllr Ali to replace Cllr Wallace on the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel
 - Cllr Mason fills the Labour vacant position on the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel.

5. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities) Finance and Procurement

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Head of Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer

5.2 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to appoint one or more sub-committee to

discharge any of its functions. The establishment of Scrutiny Panels by the Committee falls within this power and is in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

- 8.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must be approved by the OSC. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

6. Use of Appendices

None

7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

7.1 Background documents:

- *Appointments to Cttees 2022 - 23*
- *Haringey Council's Constitution*

7.2 The background papers are located at River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HQ.

7.3 To inspect them or to discuss this report further, please contact Ayshe Simsek on 0208 489 2929.

Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 March 2023

Title: Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme

Report authorised by: Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Lead Officer: Dominic O'Brien, Principal Scrutiny Officer
Tel: 020 8489 5896, E-mail: dominic.obrien@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This report provides an update on the work plan for 2022-24 for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the current work programme for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and agree any amendments, as appropriate.

2.2 That the Committee give consideration to the agenda items and reports required for its meetings in 2023/24. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 25th May 2023.

3. Reasons for decision

3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is responsible for developing an overall work plan, including work for its standing Scrutiny Panels. In putting this together, the Committee will need to have regard to their capacity to deliver the programme and officers' capacity to support them in that task.

4. Background

4.1 The Committee has previously considered the draft work plans for the Committee and the Panels. The latest iteration of the Committee's work plan is attached.

4.2 The current Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme specifies that the meeting scheduled to be held in May 2023 will also include:

- A question and answer session with the Leader of the Council.

- 4.3 The Committee should give consideration to the items for the next meeting and any amendments that it wishes to make to the Work Programme for the meetings scheduled in 2023/24.

5. Effective Scrutiny Work Programmes

- 5.1 An effective scrutiny work programme should reflect a balance of activities:
- Holding the Executive to account;
 - Policy review and development – reviews to assess the effectiveness of existing policies or to inform the development of new strategies;
 - Performance management – identifying under-performing services, investigating and making recommendations for improvement;
 - External scrutiny – scrutinising and holding to account partners and other local agencies providing key services to the public;
 - Public and community engagement – engaging and involving local communities in scrutiny activities and scrutinising those issues which are of concern to the local community.
- 5.2 Key features of an effective work programme:
- A member led process, short listing and prioritising topics – with support from officers – that;
 - reflects local needs and priorities – issues of community concern as well as Borough Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy priorities
 - prioritises topics for scrutiny that have most impact or benefit
 - involves local stakeholders
 - is flexible enough to respond to new or urgent issues
- 5.3 Depending on the selected topic and planned outcomes, scrutiny work will be carried out in a variety of ways, using various formats. This will include a variety of one-off reports. In accordance with the scrutiny protocol, the OSC and Scrutiny Panels will draw from the following to inform their work:
- Performance Reports;
 - One off reports on matters of national or local interest or concern;
 - Issues arising out of internal and external assessment (e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission);
 - Reports on strategies and policies under development or other issues on which the Cabinet or officers would like scrutiny views or support;
 - Progress reports on implementing previous scrutiny recommendations accepted by the Cabinet or appropriate Executive body.
- 5.4 In addition, in-depth scrutiny work, including task and finish projects, are an important aspect of Overview and Scrutiny and provide opportunities to thoroughly investigate topics and to make improvements. Through the gathering and consideration of evidence from a wider range of sources, this type of work enables more robust and effective challenge as well as an increased likelihood of delivering positive outcomes. In depth reviews should also help engage the public and provide greater transparency and accountability.

5.5 It is nevertheless important that there is a balance between depth and breadth of work undertaken so that resources can be used to their greatest effect.

6. Contribution to strategic outcomes

6.1 The contribution of scrutiny to the corporate priorities will be considered routinely as part of the OSC's work.

7. Statutory Officers comments

Finance and Procurement

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications these will be highlighted at that time.

Legal

7.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.

7.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the OSC.

7.4 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an OSC has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions. In accordance with the Constitution, the appointment of Scrutiny Panels (to assist the scrutiny function) falls within the remit of the OSC.

7.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

Equality

7.6 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;

- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

7.7 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;

- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
- Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
- Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
- Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.

7.8 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

8. Use of Appendices

APPENDIX A – OSC Work plan 2022-24

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work Plan 2022-24

| <p>1. Scrutiny review projects; These are dealt with through a combination of specific evidence gathering meetings that will be arranged as and when required and other activities, such as visits. Should there not be sufficient capacity to cover all these issues through in-depth pieces of work, they could instead be addressed through a “one-off” item at a scheduled meeting of the Panel. These issues will be subject to further development and scoping. It is proposed that the Committee consider issues that are “cross cutting” in nature for review by itself i.e. ones that cover the terms of reference of more than one of the panels.</p> | | |
|--|--|---|
| Project | Comments | Priority |
| <p>Prevention of Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)</p> | <p>Terms of reference: To review the current arrangements for specific areas of VAWG prevention in Haringey under the remit of the Council’s VAWG Strategy 2016-26 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council’s approach to schools-based engagement on VAWG, including the progress of recent pilot projects, the likely future resource requirements, national policy/guidance and approaches to school-based engagement elsewhere in London and the UK that Haringey could potentially learn from. • the Council’s approach to community engagement on VAWG, including the progress of recent work in this area, the likely future resource requirements, national policy/guidance and approaches to community engagement elsewhere in London and the UK that Haringey could potentially learn from. | <p>1</p> <p>Evidence sessions began in December 2022.</p> |
| | | |

| 2. “One-off” Items; These will be dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Committee. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled. | | |
|---|---|---|
| Date | Potential Items | Lead Officer/Witnesses |
| 20 June 2022 | Performance update; To monitor performance against priority targets | Performance Manager |
| | Terms of Reference | Principal Scrutiny Officer |
| | Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan | Principal Scrutiny Officer |
| 25 July 2022 | Cabinet Member Questions - Leader of the Council | Leader and Chief Executive |
| | Haringey Health Hub | Director of Strategy and Corporate Affairs – Whittington Health |
| 13 October 2022 | Cabinet Member Questions – Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning | Cabinet Member and officers |
| | | |

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|-------------------------|---|--|
| | 2021/22 Provisional Outturn report | Director of Finance |
| | Finance update – Q1 | Director of Finance |
| | Fairness Commission – Update on recommendations | |
| | Fire Safety Scrutiny Review - Update on recommendations | |
| 28 November 2022 | Cabinet Member Questions; Tackling Inequality and Resident Services | Cabinet Member and officers |
| | Intrusive fire risk assessments – Update | Assistant Director – Property Services |
| | Pilot building safety case – Update | Assistant Director – Property Services |
| 12 January 2023 | Cabinet Member Questions; Communities & Civic Life | Cabinet Member and officers |
| | Budget Scrutiny – Your Council | Cabinet Member and officers |
| | | |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| 19 January 2023 (Budget) | Budget Scrutiny; Panel feedback and recommendations. To consider panel's draft recommendations and agree input into Cabinet's final budget proposal discussions (Deputy Chair in the Chair) | Deputy Chair (in the Chair) |
| | Cabinet Member Questions; Finance | Cabinet Member and officers |
| | Treasury Management Statement | Assistant Director - Finance |
| 30 March 2023 | Cabinet Member Questions; Economic Development, Jobs & Community Cohesion | Cabinet Member and officers |
| | Pilot building safety case – Update on resident engagement | Assistant Director – Property Services |
| | Complaints Annual Report | Head of Customer Experience & Operations |
| 2023/24 | | |
| May 2023 | Cabinet Member Questions - Leader of the Council | Cabinet Member and officers |
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| July 2023 | | |
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| October 2023 | Cabinet Member Questions; Communities & Civic Life | Cabinet Member and officers |
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| November 2023 | Cabinet Member Questions; Tackling Inequality and Resident Services | Cabinet Member and officers |
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| January 2024 | Budget Scrutiny – Your Council | Cabinet Member and officers |
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| | | Deputy Chair (in the Chair) |

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| January 2024 (Budget) | Budget Scrutiny; Panel feedback and recommendations. To consider panel's draft recommendations and agree input into Cabinet's final budget proposal discussions (Deputy Chair in the Chair) | |
| | Cabinet Member Questions; Finance | |
| | Treasury Management Statement | |
| March 2024 | Cabinet Member Questions; Economic Development, Jobs & Community Cohesion | Cabinet Member and officers |
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To be allocated:

- Update about how effectively the Council communicates with residents about housing repairs.